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052
P96

APR 4 1933

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PUNCH

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY.

Nº 4785.
VOLUME
CLXXXIV.
—
MARCH 22
1933

PUNCH OFFICE, 10, BOUVERIE STREET,
LONDON, E.C.4.



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IT'S NOT JUST A NEW SHAFT FOR IRONS
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"... a shaft that will convert every golfer to steel shafted irons. I wish I'd had it twenty years ago. Such sweet "feel"—such perfect balance—such concentration of power—such an obvious appearance of efficiency. I used to think steel shafts in irons must always be unsympathetic—but this MASTER shaft has altered my ideas. As a veteran—with a veteran's failings—it is a great help to me. But oh! for the vigour of youth to gain the full advantage of it." Thus the man of keen perception and experience is converted and convinced. Only the pioneers of steel shafts could possibly have created this new True Temper Master. To try one is to find in golf a game of new and infinitely fascinating possibilities.

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THE STEEL SHAFT FOR IRONS

JOHN REYNOLDS

Made for British Steel Golf Shafts Ltd., of 26, Exchange Street, East, Liverpool, by Accles & Pollock, Ltd., of Oldbury, Birmingham.

Charivaria.

A GERMAN professor tells us that worms can sing. Every effort should be made to keep this bit of news a secret from the B.B.C.

It seems to have been overlooked that the introduction of the penny-a-mile railway-fares this summer will mean a serious reduction in the amount of money Scotsmen will save by walking.

"How would SHAKESPEARE be regarded if he were alive to-day?" asks a writer. Surely as our oldest inhabitant.

The Japanese aim at competing with the world at Rugby football. The Chinese, on the other hand, seem entirely unable to hold their passes.

At the conclusion of a tennis tournament on the Continent some of the lady-players were quite exhausted. When approached by a Press photographer they had hardly enough energy to leap in the air and pose.

"Never eat when in a bath," says a doctor. This rules out grape-fruit altogether.

When a batsman in a New South Wales cricket-match picked a nugget off the pitch the match was abandoned for a gold-rush. We really did think that Australians took the game more seriously.

"What will come after the wireless?" asks a scientific writer. Demands for the instalments, we fear.

It is stated that the béret is to be fashionable again this year. This rather suggests that we are in for another hard summer.

A Brighton man claims to be the first person to be stung by a wasp this year. He can have the same distinction in 1934 as far as London is concerned.

"Change is essential," says a doctor, "for a man who intends to make a success of his life-work." Taxi-drivers wholeheartedly disagree.

A Paris grocer has an ostrich as a

pet. The only trouble is that the bird will persist in burying its head in the sugar.

The British Museum has received a cannibals' fork which has always been exclusively used for eating human flesh. Cannibals have been unjustly suspected of indifference to the niceties of table-etiquette.

A new type of safety-razor has little wheels which run over the face. By means of an ingenious device the user can change gear when climbing a double-chin.

People in flooded districts are advised not to use the roads. They should keep to the footpaths.

In Holland recently a man shot three storks in his garden. The Amalgamated Federation of Perambulator-manufacturers have protested against this cruel deed.

"Some dogs are great hikers," says a writer. Always going for tramps.

A ground has been reserved for children to learn to play golf. It is far better that they should be taught the game properly instead of overhearing it from unskilful players on other courses.

"The stiff collar ought to disappear and never come back," says a doctor. A great many laundries seem to be of the same opinion.

A tom-cat mentioned in a recent will as the heir to over six thousand pounds has now died. We understand that his reputed offspring have no legal claim.

Le Lit.

["'Bed is the most vital thing in life, for without sleep we die.' So said Sir Charles Higham, in an address, entitled 'The Bed,' which he gave in London recently."]

Mon lit
Est mon nid,
Car je suis
Un oiseau
Dans le berceau
De la nuit.
Quel trou!
J'en suis fou!

Comme je plonge
Parmi les flots
Du ruisseau
De tes songes!

Charmante,
Ravissante,
Attrayante.
Dis donc! mais
Mon lit
De ma vie
(Si! si! si!)
Est la chose,
Je suppose,
La plus importante.

"A remarkable record of perfect attendance has been made in Dalkeith, Buccleuch Street, Sabbath School . . . four scholars deserve to be noticed as they have never been absent for more than seven years."

Religious Magazine.

Still, their absences must have changed them quite a lot.



The Enthusiast. "KEEP AS YOU ARE AND 'OLD STILL! WHAT WOULDN'T YOU SAY IF I'D 'EADED YOUR FOX?"

Arson is said to be a very rare crime in Czecho-Slovakia. Perhaps the quality of their matches accounts for this.

In America a man crossed a street by walking on the roofs of motor-cars. On a Sunday morning anybody could stroll from London to Brighton by this method.

It has been discovered that bees communicate by performing a kind of dance. Those with whom they communicate generally do the same.

"Nobody knows how anybody else lives," says a critic. Leisurely window-cleaners, however, get a very good idea.

"Many of our modern poets prefer to remain unknown," declares a critic. Most of them, we are afraid, have no alternative.

Sunshine After Rain.

(An Apology.)

A FORTNIGHT ago in this paper there was published a story entitled

The Shovewood.

It was a Naval story. Apparently it was a very old Naval story. I did not know this when I allowed it to appear, and when I was told I was sorry. But only for a short time. Afterwards I was glad. For this story, entitled

The Shovewood,

seems to have drawn England together.

At a time when most foreign nations are in a state of turmoil, fearful of revolution, divided in their counsels and perplexed in their politics, the people of England have roused themselves and responded to the call of the Shovewood as an old war-horse neighs at the sound of the trumpet.

Almost as soon as the paper was exhibited on the book-stalls they began to telephone.

"Do you know what you have done? You have published a story that has been told a dozen times before!"

And I detected a ring of demoniacal triumph in their tone.

Then came the harvest of letters. From quiet country granges where retired admirals lived reserved and austere, as if their highest plot to plant the bergamot, I received a storm of abuse.

"This is the oldest story in the Service. It was told by NELSON to HARDY. The trick was played on EFFINGHAM when he was a snotty. I am surprised that *Punch* of all papers should have lapsed into so grievous an error."

Very gruff they were.

"When I was on the China Station in *Valiant*," wrote one Commander, "it was forbidden to repeat that story on pain of walking the plank."

Nor was the torrent of vituperation confined to the Senior Service.

"Seven times have I read that accursed tale in seven different magazines," roared a major-general, who had doubtless cancelled a round of golf in order to communicate with me, exchanging the niblick for the not so familiar pen. "What have you to say for yourself now?"

I had nothing to say at the moment. I am trying to say a few words here.

The thunders of the Church lagged not far behind the lightning of the sword.

"How are the mighty fallen!!!" came crashing across a clerical postcard from the North, as though I were Lucifer, Son of the Morning. You might have thought a clergyman would have been more charitable and tried to console me for my lapse. But no. Mr. Punch had become anathema. The hoofed heel of a satyr had crushed the chestnut rind at the chestnut root. There was nothing that could atone for my sin.

* * *

Hardly had the chorus of execration in England died away when letters began to come in from Englishmen and Englishwomen who were wintering in the Riviera or easing the burden of our iniquitous income-tax by living half the year abroad.

"Is this your boasted omniscience?" they wrote on foreign paper scented with mimosa and violets. As if I had ever boasted of omniscience—I who had been taught that the wise man is the man who knows he is a fool!

"When I opened the paper I could scarcely believe my

eyes!" said one. "Here was this story, a favourite with THEODORE HOOK, printed in *Punch* on the 8th of March in the year of grace 1933. *Selah.*"

* * *

Comment from foreigners I did not mind. When M. DALADIER wrote, as he did, "Alas, my brave! What error profound and irreparable! I find something of the Teutonic *gaucherie* in a mind which sets itself to produce a romance of so venerable an antiquity. What *gaffe*, in fine!" I consoled myself by remembering that we were an island and a peculiar people, rough, repetitive, uncultured, without the grace and polish of the French, but somehow noble after all.

Towards HITLER, who had apparently paused in the midst of establishing a Fascist *bloc* from the North Sea to Italy in order to pen me a few caustic lines of recrimination, I felt equal indifference:—

"Your often-before-repeated British-naval-laughter-story," he said rather cumbrously, "has to me pointed out been, and if I Brown-shirt dictator of England were I would cause your wrongfully-humorous-called periodical at once suppressed to be."

MUSSOLINI's telegraph "*Basta*" left me likewise unmoved; nor was I troubled by the bitter messages from the Polish Corridor. Greece and Turkey have so far said nothing. And, although for the sake of my journalistic conscience I am having the Scandinavian cablegrams deciphered at the British Museum, I do not much mind what they say. Faced again by the taunts of the new American Ambassador I shall attempt to pass off the incident with a light reference to a grammatical solecism by MARK TWAIN.

* * *

No. It is when the daughterlands awake to the full enormity of my transgression that I shall begin to tremble again, and tremble in part with sorrow but in part with joy. When the Fleet on foreign service round the globe has learnt what I have done, when the broadsides of abuse break out from Aden, Shanghai and Singapore; when India speaks; when Australia forgets the body-line bowling to attack me; when Canada exults in my tears and British Guiana rejoices in my discomfiture; when I realise that never the lotus closes and never the wildfowl wake but someone is getting pleasure from *Punch's* huge mistake, it is then that the pangs of humiliation will be drowned once more in the proud realisation of the solidarity of the English-speaking world. It is when from distant Ashanti is forwarded the epigrammatic sneer: "*Wo ye woho se die wa kum tenkwa!*" (You give yourself airs as if you had killed a bongo!) "And now where are you?" that I shall feel stirred again to deep thankfulness by the rallying call I have given to Imperial sentiment throughout the globe.

* * *

So much so that I shall probably publish the story entitled

The Shovewood

a second time.

EVOE.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

By special arrangement with MESSRS. W. H. SMITH AND SON and other firms involved, in order to increase the comfort of railway travelling, a free copy of the entire works of CHARLES DICKENS will not be handed to any purchaser of this paper at any bookstall whatsoever.



THE AWAKENING.

(MAJOR WALTER ELLIOT PIPES A NEW SPRING DITTY ON THE POOR OLD FARM.)



EXTRAVAGANCE.

We Ride-a-de Donk.

DONKEY-RIDING is, I regret to say, a lost art in England. Pilgrims, it may be, once rode upon them; rustics, for all I know, still do so. But, speaking for myself, it is a lost art. That is why my trousers are torn and have a red patch on them.

Not that I could have avoided the red patch had I been never so polished a donkey-rider, for it was due to the donkey's saddle rather than to the donkey itself. But then you never know what sort of a saddle you will get in Morocco. Some will stain you pink, some green, while some will produce a sort of rainbow effect. But mine is definitely red.

Of course it's the rain that does it. It oughtn't to rain in Morocco, but it does; and on the day that I am trying to tell you about it poured. And Mahomed Ben Ali, who is a rogue, but a humorous rogue, let all the saddles get wet. And when a saddle is covered all over by a cheap red cloth one gets a cheap red stain on one's trousers. When, however, it is a bright chintzy

affair in a pleasing stripe pattern, one gets— Well, you see what I mean? Rainbows and all that.

The road to the old mosque in Tangier—by the way, I forgot to mention that all this happened in Tangier—is very narrow and very steep and cobbled. But we rode up it. Yes, Heaven forgive us, we rode up it. Twelve stone of good yeoman stock on six stone of donkey. It was a disgraceful act. Had my steed turned round like Balaam's and rebuked me I could only have blushed for shame. I offered to get off, but Mahomed said "No" and hit the donkey to emphasise it. So on we went till, almost weeping with remorse, we arrived at the old mosque.

The descent was even more heart-breaking. My donkey, whose name must surely have been Modestine, took it slowly. Heaven knows I did not want it to hurry, but even so disaster overtook us. Which brings me to saddles again. In England when you saddle a horse you strap the thing on firmly, taking one end of the girth in your teeth to get a better purchase. But in Morocco you do none of these things.

You just tie it on with an old piece of string loosely. (Likewise the stirrups, which give way when trodden on firmly.) The result of this carefree practice was that while we were descending a bit of road like the side of a house the girth broke. On a horizontal donkey nothing much happens when a girth breaks; but on a perpendicular donkey it is otherwise, and nothing prevents the saddle from sliding gracefully over the donkey's neck.

As a matter of fact, bar a few severe contusions, I wasn't really hurt and I soon remounted. The saddle was now firmer because Mahomed had borrowed a new and better bit of string, but all the same I held on pretty carefully to the donkey's neck—or rather to those long hairs that grow along the top of it—for the rest of the way down. All honour be to that donkey. Slithering dangerously over the cobbles, at times sinking to its knees as if in prayer, we crept down the hill. But we arrived safely. It wasn't till we had dismounted and I had paid Mahomed far too much that I observed that I had tattered—and reddened—the only decent pair of trousers I had brought with me.

Bridge Corner.

At our club we pride ourselves that, though provincial even to the point of rurality, we keep up-to-date; and we have therefore conducted extensive experiments with Contract Bridge. We receive all the systems with open arms and unbiassed minds and examine them with a fine impartiality. Jump bids, cue bids, psychic bids, control bids, game-demand bids, slam-invitation bids, one-over-one bids, forcing bids, pre-emptive bids—all are known to us; some better than others, of course, and perhaps none with the familiarity that breeds contempt. But we consider our close study of the matter entitles us to hold opinions.

We see no reason why our club should not give a lead to London and New York; so when the General made his suggestion he found us more than ready to give it a trial.

He said, "It appears to me that with a full use of the bidding conventions it is quite apparent to everyone at the table where every card is when the bidding finishes. Therefore why maintain the unnecessary formality of bidding the suits by name when the bids don't mean what you say at all, and everyone knows quite well what you *do* mean? Why not drop that rather foolish pretence and say in so many words just what you want your partner to know and what your opponents must of necessity know also?"

If this was not progress, nothing is; so we went to the card-room.

The General and I cut together against the Curate and Sir Bethnal Green. It was the General's call.

He said, "My call, partner, indicates that I have very good Spades and outside strength as well."

Sir Bethnal said, "My call indicates a very solid suit of Diamonds, partner."

I said, "My call, General, shows you quite clearly that you need not fear Diamonds. I have either the Ace or Chicane."

The Curate said, "My call tells you all that I haven't anything."

The General said, "I now inform you, partner, that in view of your Diamond control my hand looks very strong indeed, and I invite you to a game bid."

Sir Bethnal said, "Very sorry, Rev. old thing, but I daren't make another sound."

I said, "I am now free to indicate, partner, that over and above my Diamond control I have very considerable strength, and as I am quite strong in Spades I confirm that as the suit in which the hand shall be played."



TWO INVETERATE NEWSPAPER LETTER-WRITERS SIMULTANEOUSLY HEAR THE FIRST CUCKOO.

The Curate said, "My call tells you that I haven't found anything yet."

The General said, "Your call, partner, tells me that you have an honour in Spades which is missing from my hand, but you must also have some other strength not yet disclosed, and I therefore raise the call in Spades to give you an opportunity of showing where that strength lies."

Sir Bethnal said quite shortly, "No bid."

I said, "I now inform you, General, that I have a long suit of Clubs. They should be very useful to you."

The Curate said, "No."

The General said, "As I have the Ace of Clubs, I know you must still have some strength not yet specifically indicated, partner, and it must be in Hearts, so I bid a small slam in Spades."

Sir Bethnal made a noise which we took to mean "No bid."

I said, "Your inference as to Hearts was correct, General, and to show you how completely I control that suit I now bid a grand slam in Hearts."

The Curate, rousing himself, said, "Haven't you fellows finished yet?"

The General said, "Splendid, partner! I now have no hesitation in bidding grand slam in Spades, and I'm sure it's clear to everyone we must make it. No need to play the hand, I suppose?" and he glanced round the table with a look of assured inquiry.

The Curate showed signs of awaking from sleep. His hand appeared to acquire a new interest for him, and after a moment's concentration he looked at the General and said, "I say, I'm frightfully sorry, General, and all that, but I've only got twelve cards."



"ARE YOU SURE TOGO IS TIED TO THE TREE, DARLING? I THOUGHT I HEARD HIM RUNNING ABOUT."
 "ER—HE'S STILL TIED TO THE TREE, DEAR."

Vernal Reverie.

OVERHEAD not a cloud mars the delicate translucent blue of the heavens. The sun is singing and the birds are shining in the trees, while on every bush and hedgerow the first tender buds struggle out towards the light. Already the curious spade-like leaves of the sweet little woodland philomel are beginning to appear, pushing their way bravely through the tushery and what-not of the undergrowth. All Nature seems astir.

I should be the first to admit that it is raining heavily as I write, but yesterday was the official opening of spring, and, that being so, to-day's unofficial opening of umbrellas must go by the board and burgeoning become the burden of our song. Or so at least I had intended; but on reflection it occurs to me that the bursting of buds and promise of fragile shoots have been a little overdone. Other and worthier pens than mine have told of the annual re-birth of privet hedges and hymned the praise of the thick green scum that forms on ponds and streamlets in the merry month of March. The sprightly

behaviour of birds too at this season of the year has already been adequately dealt with both in prose and verse, and I doubt whether any additional notes of mine on the song of the lark or the mating of the bearded kestrel would meet with widespread appreciation. But springlike this article shall be, by hook or by crook; and, after all, the world of nature is not the only sphere in which the influence of the Vernal Equinox, as we say at Greenwich, makes itself felt. So I shall begin again like this:—

When I came down to breakfast this morning I noticed a new feeling in the atmosphere—a kind of tang, a sense of impending joyousness which the kippers alone could never have accounted for. All morning I wondered what this might mean and why there was that little song of gladness in my heart, until at last in the cupboard under the stairs I found the secret. I had gone there in search of some domestic trifle—a keg of nails, maybe, or a trapeze—and as I rummaged among the tinnacks, gimcrack knick-knacks and other hyphenated *bric-à-brac* with which the place was littered, my hand alighted

by chance upon my old cricket-boots and immediately all uncertainty was at an end. So that was it! Something springlike (*here we are!*) in the fine March morning had warned my subconscious self that the season was almost upon us, and now, with my hand on my boots, I seemed to hear already the sweet sound of bat meeting ball and the crisp comments of the on-lookers. Dear boots! what triumphs you and I have had together, what failures bravely borne! See this faint smudge near the instep that tells of a boundary saved without thought of the agony it would entail; and that long gash on the toe—can I ever forget the day I failed to score and tripped up over my bat as I climbed the pavilion steps? Have patience, boots; a little while and we shall be reunited. Cricket is in the air. . . .

Yes, yes; this is all very well, but when you have come right down to it, who wants to hear about my boots? And anyway the air has been so thick with cricket all the winter that no one except a hermetically-sealed recluse would have to go to a cupboard to be reminded of it—which all goes to show

the folly of rushing at a subject without due and proper consideration. A moment's thought just now would have saved this waste of time and paper and given me the opportunity of writing with studied ease on some less hackneyed summer pastime—bathing, for instance. I might have told you how, while looking through a pile of white waistcoats (how many have you got?), I came across the swimming-suit (azure trunks beneath a singlet quartered sable and gules with arms as a rule reversed) that caused such a stir at Hastings last July; after which it would have been child's play to give a description of the sparkling waves, with some notes on seaweed and a lot of hypocritical rubbish about the beauty of

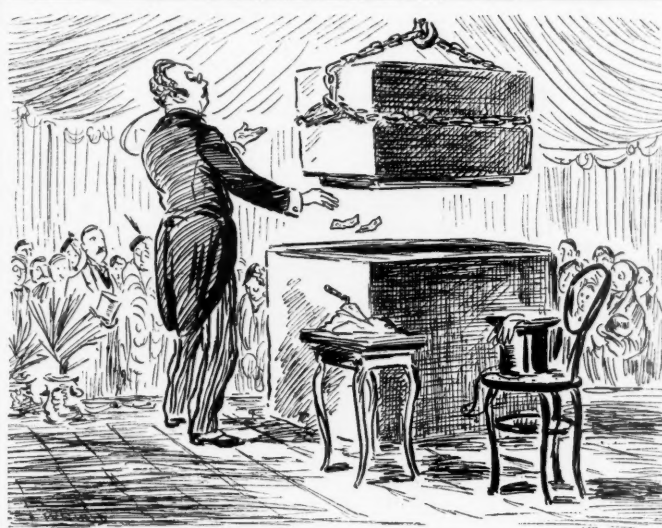
Monte Carlo, to which I have never been. But the precious chance has been let slip, and instead we shall have to content ourselves with a topic suggested by the white waistcoats, viz., Spring Modes for Men.

What will be worn by the Man of Fashion during the coming season? Here is a question of absorbing interest to every self-respecting man, and, if you will give me a moment to run upstairs and review my wardrobe, you shall have the answer. . . .

The general tendency for men's wear in the coming spring is towards conservatism, and few, if any, startling changes will be noticeable during the next three months. Waists will probably be a little more pronounced, and waistcoats consequently slackened to meet the demand; but otherwise lounge-suits will remain the same, the useful pin-stripe being generally preferred to the hitherto popular Harris tweed, as the latter has gone so badly at the elbows. Grey trousers follow accepted lines, but the sports-coat seems likely to be worn with a slit up the back, unless something is done about it pretty quickly; while white flannels will again be unaccountably shorter and yellower than in the previous year. There is no indication of any new departure in headwear, in spite of the fact that I promised myself a panama this season, but overcoats are certain to sag more in front and rather fewer buttons may be a distinctive feature of the newest styles. For evening wear last year's model in dinner-jackets will

continue to be popular (as indeed it has been since 1928), though there is some talk of a new silk facing at three-and-eleven the yard, and a reaction is bound to set in against the amusing ruffled-collar effect which attracted so much attention in 1932. Underwear in several romantic shades . . .

Romance! How could I be so blind? To talk of pants when the great theme of Love's Awakening lies ready to my hand! To immerse myself in woollen underclothes while, in the burgeoning lanes outside, heart beats against heart and troths are plighted under the light of the iridescent moon! Shame, eternal shame upon me if, in the few lines that yet remain, I fail to pay my tribute



DISTINGUISHED PERSON LAYING FOUNDATION-STONE PLACES TWO SWEEP-TICKETS FOR THE LAST DERBY BENEATH THE STONE IN LIEU OF THE USUAL PALTRY SUM OF MONEY.

to that noblest manifestation of the spring—the dawn of Love's young dream! Listen to this:—

Hand-in-hand they halted by the old gate where they had so often played together as children in those far-off days. Buds were bursting all around them, and in the great oak-tree a jackdaw carolled blithely as she laid egg after egg with mathematical precision; but they had no thought, these two, for anything but each other. Suddenly she turned to him, and on her face was a look that, by some merciful dispensation of Providence, no man had ever seen before. "Prue," he muttered hoarsely, "Prue!" and the next instant she was in his arms.

And there we must be content to leave her, the forward little minx.

H. F. E.

Spring Song.

IN the Spring the poet's lyre is
Passionate with sweet inquiries,
And the small electric-fire is

Put away.

Rhymers find what doves are there for,
Lovers scrap the why and wherefore
And look up the railway fare for
Orelay.

Mariners suspend their votive
Vestments, aged men are dotive,
And we see the primrose motif

Worked to death;

Nursemaids in the Park go gooey,
Writers write a lot of hooley,
Dick is sending orchids to Elizabeth.

Sales go down in health-
revivers,
Scotsmen stand dispensing
fivers
In the streets, and taxi-
drivers

Pray for rain;
George cleans golf-balls
on the loofah,
HITLER goes a trifle too
far,
And the pigeons on the
roof are

Raising Cain.

Are you off to the
Bahamas?
Then look out your
beach-pyjamas,
Slippers from contented
llamas,

Bathing-gowns.
Are you golfing? Are
you courting?
Are you going river
sporting?

Will you watch the lambs cavorting
On the Downs?

All the way is roses, roses;
Gone are red and purple noses;
Lady-cops are wearing posies
Round the ear.

Young and old, cheer in the spring-
time,
It's the only pretty ringtime;
Get together, have a king-time
While it's here!

Tough Luck.

"SPORTSWOMEN TURN TO PIGSKIN."
Daily Paper.

"On returning from the fruit fields I
visited the Factory and inspected the boiling
of the Jam with the Factory Manager."
Doctor's Report in Jam-Maker's Leaflet.

It is said by some epicures that the
flavour of Factory-Manager Conserve
has to be tasted to be believed.

Misleading Cases.

Bold v. The Attorney-General.

THE House of Lords to-day dismissed this appeal.

The Lord Chancellor said:—

"We are compelled reluctantly to dismiss this appeal without considering the merits of the appellant's claim. The appellant, General Bold, is persuaded that a wrong has been done to him by the Crown in relation to his conditions of service in His Majesty's Army, of which he is, or was, a distinguished member. *Prima facie*, I am inclined to think that his contention has substance; but it would be improper for me even to discuss it, for the reason that, whether it be valid in equity or not, the action at law is wrongly conceived and will not lie.

"This is not the common case of an inexperienced litigant impatiently seeking justice through an inappropriate channel. The General has already appealed to the War Office by letter, in person and in vain; he has, under Section 42 of the Army Act, presented a petition to His Majesty the King (though it is not clear whether His Majesty ever received it); he has applied to the Secretary of State for an inquiry; he has brought an action against the Secretary of State; he has applied for a writ of *mandamus* against the Army Council, and has instituted other legal proceedings, all of which were found by the High Court to be erroneous in form. In despair, and again in error, he began this action against the Attorney-General. So, by way of a monotonous succession of unfavourable decisions, his appeal for justice has reached at last the ears of your Lordships; and we are compelled to send him away, though we are not satisfied that justice has been done.

"This conclusion must be so repugnant to your Lordships' House, which is the final fount, the loftiest pinnacle, of British justice, that I cannot record it without a word or two of comment and protestation.

"One of the first actions of a loyal young Englishman who begins to study the law of the land is to read carefully the pages which are concerned with the King. And he learns with some surprise the ancient constitutional and legal principle that *The King can do no wrong*. He is surprised for this reason: that the whole course of his historical studies at school has led him to believe

that at the material dates of English history the King was always doing wrong. Leaving out of account the past hundred years or more, in which our country has been blessed with monarchs of blameless character and reputation, the Kings whose names are most firmly fixed in the national memory are those who continually did wrong, whether in a constitutional, political, social, moral or religious sense; and I am quite sure that the familiar names of JOHN, CHARLES, JAMES and HENRY are at this moment present in your Lordships' minds. It is not too much to say that the whole Constitution has been erected upon the assumption that the King not only is capable of doing wrong but is more likely to do wrong than other men, if he is given the chance. To this hypothesis we owe the Great Charter, the Petition of Right, the Bill of Rights, the Act of Settlement, the Habeas Corpus Act, the doctrine of Ministerial responsibility, the independence of the judiciary, the very existence of the two Houses of Parliament, and indeed all the essential pillars in the noble fabric of the Constitution.

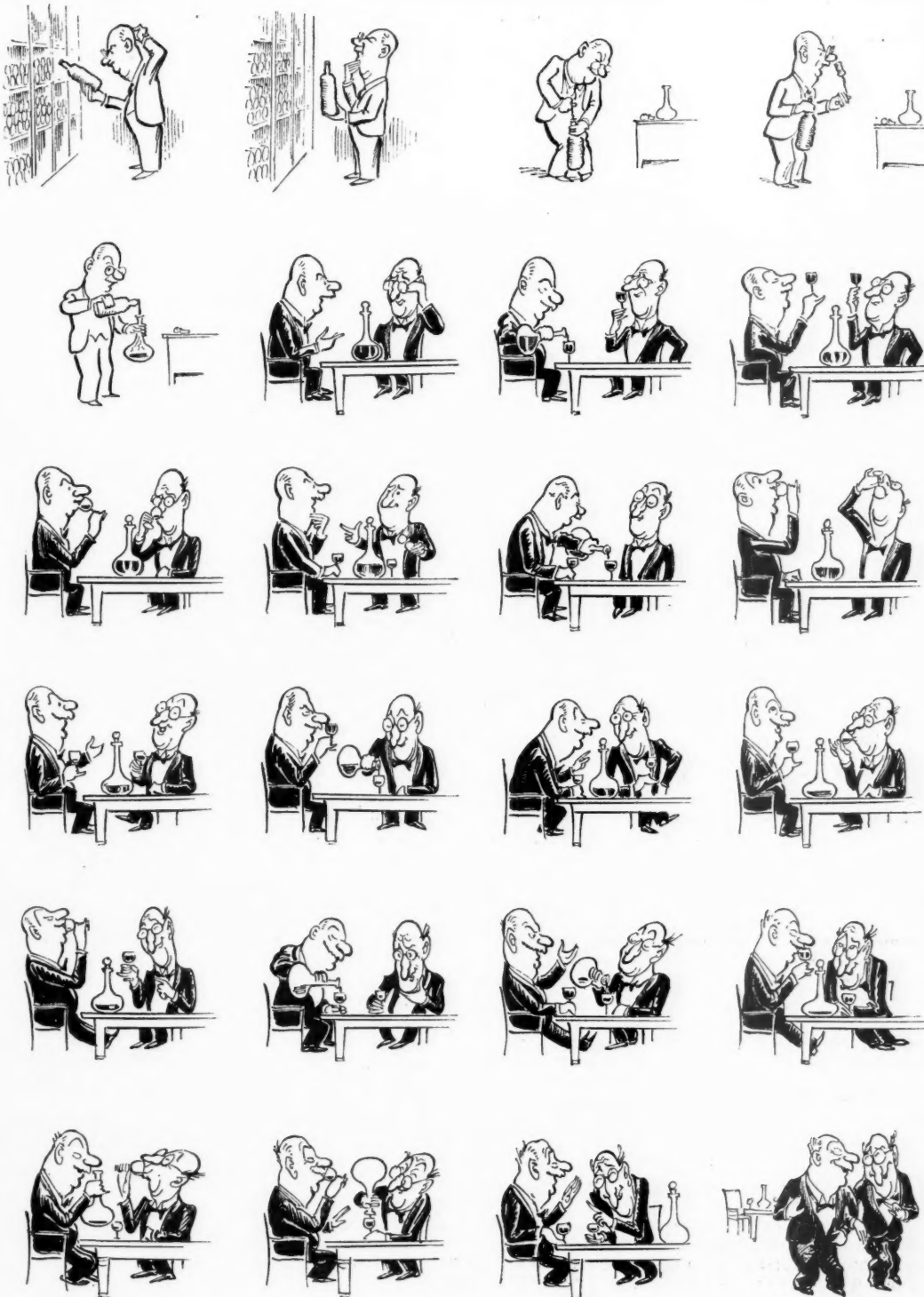
"It is odd, then, that this maxim should survive in a political system which was invented to contradict it, and that our forefathers, who were compelled to rebel against the practice, should have reverently retained the principle. For in origin, I suspect, these words were not so much a testimony to royal infallibility as a convenient excuse for royal misfeasance. KING JOHN, I believe, was the first monarch to announce to his people that the King can do no wrong. But times have changed; and at the present time, if the maxim were no more than a loyal expression of confidence in the wisdom and integrity of the present occupant of the Throne and his family, few subjects, I think, would be found to quarrel with it.

"Unhappily, as the appellant has discovered, it has important legal and practical corollaries which are in no way relevant to the character of the Monarch; and these are widely open to question. One of those fogs of ambiguity so dear to the laws of England surrounds our usage of the words 'King' and 'Crown.' The 'Crown' in this country is the symbol not only of Royalty but of the State, and distinguishes not only the Palace but the village post-office and police-station. When we speak of the 'Crown' we sometimes mean the Monarch himself; but more often we mean the Government or some Department of it, or some department of some Department, and sometimes in practice, it is to be feared,

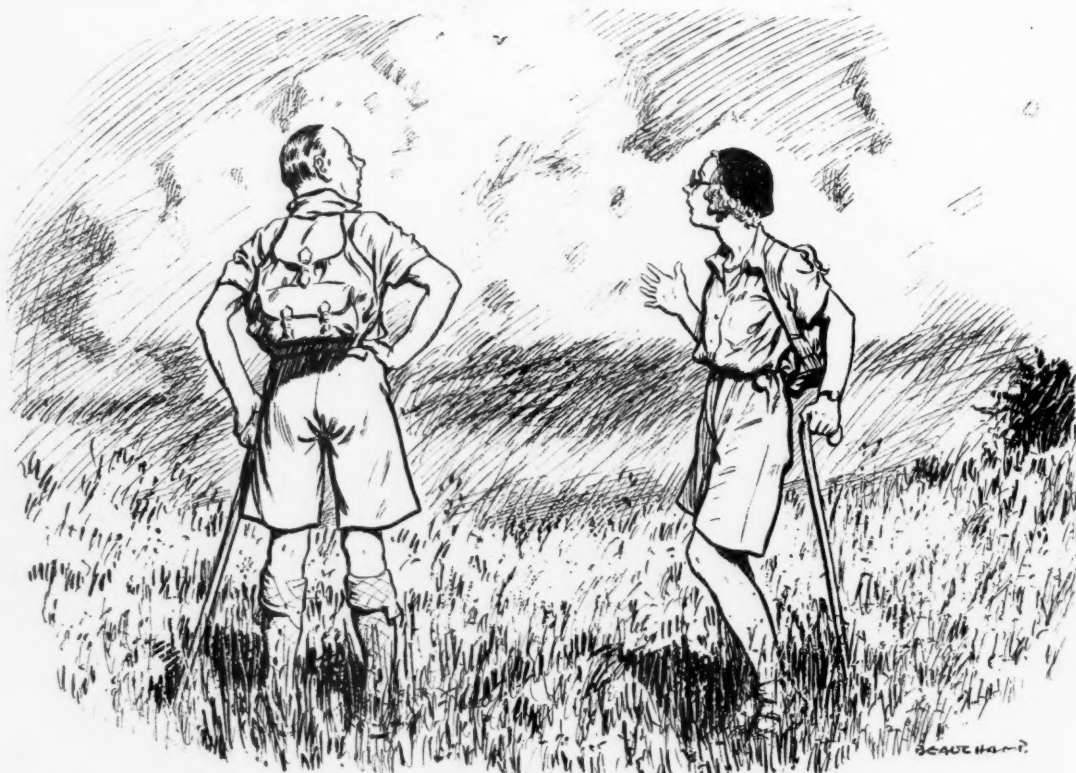
some subordinate clerk in some department of some Department. And all these Departments, nominally controlled by one who is nominally the King's Minister, enjoy in practice the benefit of the doctrine that the King can do no wrong. So that if a subject be injured through the negligent or dangerous driving of a Post-Office van he has at law no remedy against the Crown or Post-Office; whereas in like case he could recover damages from a private company which employed the driver. For the 'Crown' is incapable of negligence; neither can it be charged with libel or fraud or any other tortious act; nor is it responsible, like the rest of us, for the tortious acts of its servants done within the general scope of their employment.

"My Lords, this cannot be justified except by loose or arrogant thinking. It is well that the King's authority in the constitutional exercise of his prerogative should be beyond question; and it is very well that in his own person he should be spared from the vexatious pursuit of litigants, for he can be trusted to do justice and right in his own affairs. But beyond that the ancient maxim should no longer have effect. There is no good reason, except in time of war or civil emergency, why a Government Department should not be amenable to the ordinary law of tort in its relations with the subject or its own servants; nor can I perceive why a contract of service in the Army or Navy should not be as sacred and as strictly enforceable as a contract of service in a restaurant or drug-store. This is no trivial or academic matter; for the Crown, or State, is constantly enlarging the scope of its activities and the number of its servants. And there is a powerful political party which proposes to increase them indefinitely. If their dream be ever realised the whole machinery of industry and trade will be controlled by the State, or Crown; almost every citizen will be in the King's employ; almost every motor-van will be driven by a servant of the Crown; and at every turn of life the maxim that the King can do no wrong will, if it still survives, be operative. The laundry-woman who spoils our shirts, the grocer who gives us false measure, the journalist who defames us will all be servants of the Crown; and it will be impossible to pursue their employers in the Courts. It will be idle too for the ordinary citizen (if any) to found a claim for justice on the splendid promises of Magna Carta or the Bill of Rights.

"He will still, however, be able to proceed against the individual servant of



THE UNKNOWN VINTAGE.



She (quoting). "HARK, HARK, THE LARK AT HEAVEN'S GATE SINGS!"
He. "I SAY, I RECKON YOU OUGHT TO WRITE POETRY."

the Crown who has injured him, though not against his Department or the Minister at the head of it. And I am happy to tell the appellant in this case that, if he is indeed the victim of a tortious act, it has been done by someone at the War Office; and if he can find that individual he can proceed against him (provided it is not the Secretary of State); and if the tortfeasor (when found) be a man of substance the appellant may recover damages. I wish him luck. The appeal must be dismissed."

Lord Lick said: "I concur. What bilge it all is!"

Lord Arrowroot said: "I concur. The principle in this case means 'The Soldier Has No Rights.' Why should he?"

Lord Sheep said: "I do not agree. The King is one thing; an office in Whitehall is another. The maxim says 'The King.' A writ of *mandamus* should issue to the Army Council."

Lord Raby said nothing, being asleep.

The appeal was dismissed, Lord Sheep dissenting, Lord Raby asleep.

A. P. H.

Flu in These Days.

THE flu epidemic has so far abated that we can now take stock of the situation. And what do we find? I say, what do we find? We find that national health is gravely impaired by influenza. Statistics show—[*Yes, all right; get on with it.*—Ed.] Passing from these significant figures and omitting much that is interesting, we come to a little-noted but extremely important point—the change in recent years in the treatment of the invalid by those with whom he or she lives.

Did some young and lovely girl (like myself, for instance) suffer from influenza only twenty-five years ago some such touching little scene as the following invariably took place:—

The Mistress of the Household. Cook, Miss Hermione is better, but the doctor says she must still take only liquid food. Will you make her some more of your delicious chicken-broth?

Cook (heartily). That I will, Mum, and glad to do it. And I'll put her up some jelly that'll melt in her mouth, pore young lady.

The M. of H. (graciously). Thank you.
 [Exit M. of H.]

The Housemaid. Oh, Cook, it goes to my heart to see her lying sick and suffering—and that patient!

Cook (her kind heart under her rough exterior much touched). There, there, Emily, don't take on. Perhaps she'd fancy a nice egg-and-milk? I'll whisk it up at once and you can take it her.

The Kitchenmaid (starting up with her honest cheeks flushed crimson). Oh, Cook, mayn't I take it?

Cook (her kind heart, etc.). Bless the girl! Whatever next?

The K.-M. (all her heart in her honest eyes). Oh, please!

Cook. Well, well, I suppose you may. Here it is, and mind you don't spill it.

Emily. And don't bang the door, and don't let Fido come upstairs or he'll bark and disturb her, pore sweet young lady! Ask her if she'd like the blinds drawn; and on your way back

go into the garden and find Smith and tell him not to wheel his old wheelbarrow anywhere near her window.

Cook. Ah, yes, a squeaky wheel would fair drive her crazy, pore lamb!

The K.-M. I won't forget—truly I won't.

Cook. Off with you, then.

[Exit K.-M.]

Cook (to Emily, her k. h. still touched under her still r. e.). That girl's fair gone on Miss Hermione.

Emily (fondly). Can you wonder?

To-day, such has been the economic upheaval that, when some lovely young girl (such as myself) catches the complaint, she herself takes part in a scene of this nature:—

Sharer of Flatlet (entering sickroom). He's gone. He said you'd better stay on slops. That means opening another tin of chicken-soup, I suppose.

Lovely Young Girl (hereafter called "Me" for short). Has Mrs. Gumble turned up yet?

S. of F. Yes, but she can only stay half-an-hour, so I'd better be getting on with the washing-up. [Exit S. of F.]

Enter Mrs. Gumble.

Mrs. Gumble (setting down coal-box with a crash). Mornin'. You're still laying up, I see?

Me (apologetically). Yes. You see, the doctor—

Mrs. G. (darkly). Them is lucky as can lay up. (Does the grate loudly, humming the while. Gathers up impedimenta and moves to door. Turning at door) I never believe in giving in meself. Work it off—that's what I say.

[Exit Mrs. G.]

Enter S. of F., with young and struggling terrier.

S. of F. (distractedly). Can I shut Blinker in here for a bit? He's had the oven-cloth, a piece of bacon-rind and two raw parsnips in less than ten minutes!

Me (resignedly). All right.

[Exit S. of F.]

Me (suddenly). Blinker, don't! (Pause.) Blinker, naughty! (Pause.) Blinker, don't! (Pause. Resignedly) Oh, all right, then; come up for goodness' sake!

[Blinker hauled on to bed by collar. Patient lies back exhausted while dog ranges rapidly and joyfully from end to end of the bed.]

Enter S. of F.

S. of F. (distractedly). That man's called for the laundry and I'd forgotten all about it. Could you possibly write the list?

Me. Blinker, DON'T!

S. of F. (soothingly). I'll turn him out into the yard. (Does so and returns.)



THE POSTMAN'S WEDDING.

Three sheets, four pillow-cases, two d'oyleys—

Me. Oh, Lord, I can't spell d'oyleys!

[Bell rings OFF. Exit S. of F.]

Me (to myself). I must be really ill if I can't spell d'oyleys.

Enter S. of F.

S. of F. (frantically). The butcher's boy says he's just seen Blinker rushing down the road barking at a tram! I suppose I must go after him. (Knock at door.) Come in.

Enter Mrs. Gumble.

Mrs. G. (stiffly). I've just come to tell you there wasn't enough milk for me lunch, so I've 'ad to make do with some chicken-soup what was on the stove.

[Exit Mrs. G.]

S. of F. (to Me). Well, you'll just have to have Bevo, that's all.

Me. Damn everything!

S. of F. (unfeelingly). Don't lose your temper. It's far worse to be the one who's up.

Me. I—

[All further conversation is drowned by a sudden clanking as three trams follow each other across the points outside.]

Another Shocker.

"The recently-published reminiscences of Lady — deal with many famous people in politics, art and literature she has met in the course of her long life. Her ladyship's recollections run into 2 volts."—*N. Z. Paper.*

"VICTOR SMITH ON LAST LAP.

TWO WAITING GIRLS."

Daily Paper.

It sounds more like Musical-Chairs.

Sufficient Excuse.

At the Chelsea Police Court a young man of independent means, named Ernest Swain, aged 21, of Lovers' Walk Chambers, Shepherd Market, Mayfair, was charged with trespassing on the premises of a florist's shop in Sloane Square, breaking a window and removing a bunch of violets.

P.C. Vigil said that he was on duty in Sloane Square on the previous night at 2.15 A.M. when his attention was called to the sound of a smash and falling glass. Making quickly for the direction from which it came, he was just in time to see that one of the windows of the florist's shop there, which is lighted up all night, was broken. A taxi was hurrying away, but he was just able to read its number-plate.

Percy Cupid, a cab-driver, said that on the previous night he had been called at two o'clock to a house in Cheyne Walk, where a dance was in progress, and had driven off with the young gentleman in the dock and a lady.

Magistrate. Was the man sober?

Witness. So far as I could see, yes, Sir.

Magistrate. Did he seem to be excited?

Witness. Who wouldn't be?

Magistrate. What do you mean?

Witness. With such a piece of goods, your worship.

Magistrate. What do you mean by "piece of goods"?

Witness. The lady, your worship.

Magistrate. Well, what happened?

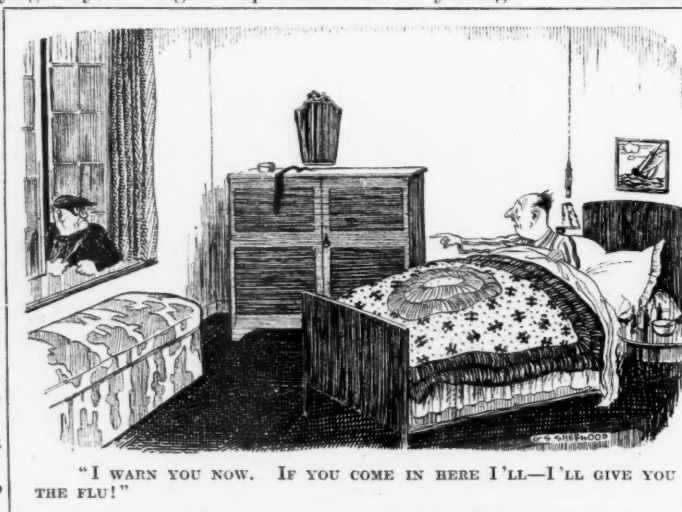
Witness. As we was passing through Sloane Square the gentleman suddenly put his head out of the window and called "Stop!" and the next thing I knew he had hopped out, had smashed one of the plate-glass windows of the flower-shop there and was back in the cab with a bunch of violets. It was all done in a jiffy; and this morning a cop came along and said I was wanted here.

Evidence as to the damage done having been given, the accused was told to tell his story. Everything, he began, that the last witness had said was true except that he had not mentioned why he did it or that he had left a couple of pound-notes inside the window to pay for any trouble he was causing. "I

plead 'Guilty,'" he continued, "but I couldn't very well have behaved differently, because Miss Precious happened to see the violets and say that she would like some. When a lady says a thing like that, your worship, what is a fellow to do? And such a lady! You should see her, Sir."

Magistrate. Do you mean to say that you have so little strength of mind that no sooner do you hear a wish expressed than you commit any lawless action?

Accused. It depends, of course, upon who expresses that wish. Under certain conditions I might be able to exercise self-control, but when it is someone like Miss Precious, and one's just been dancing with her, and she's let you see her to her home, and the shop's all lighted up and full of lovely things—



"I WARN YOU NOW. IF YOU COME IN HERE I'LL—I'LL GIVE YOU THE FLU!"

well, I don't see that there's any way out of it. Ladies are ladies, you know, Sir, and Miss Precious—

Magistrate. I don't know anything of the sort. All I know is that property must be respected.

Accused. Yes, Sir; I'm sorry about that; but I did leave a couple of pound-notes. If that's not enough I'll add what's needed.

Magistrate. You certainly will.

Accused. I mean cheerfully. I'm awfully sorry about it, but the flowers were very provocative, just like Spring, Sir, and Miss Precious. . . . Really, Sir, in fairness to me you ought to see Miss Precious. She's waiting in a car outside.

Magistrate. Is she an old lady?

Accused. Good heavens, no, Sir! She's only nineteen.

Magistrate. How long have you known her?

Accused. I met her for the first time at the dance. She's wonderful. I'm sure you'll think so.

Magistrate. Why should I think so? *Accused.* Because you know what's what.

Magistrate (to an officer). Bring her in.

The officer left the Court and in a minute or so returned with Miss Precious, who bowed to the Bench and smiled at Ernest Swain.

Magistrate. The accused is discharged. Next case. E. V. L.

Aintree.

THERE are many famous courses
In the width of English ground
Where the steeple-chasing horses
And the rainbow silks go round;
But it's Aintree, Aintree, Aintree

Where the champion
'chasers run,
Where there's courage
to be tested
And there's glory to
be won.

There the dancing sun-
beams quiver
On the colours as they
glide,
Or the mists of Mersey
river
Give but glimpses of
the ride;
But it's always Aintree
—Aintree

Where the pride of
England waits
To hear the turf re-
sponding
To the drum of racing
plates.

There the gallant lads are weighing
For the ride they love so well;
There the serried crowds are swaying
As they hear the saddling-bell.
And it's Aintree, Aintree, Aintree,
Boot and saddle, fence and fall,
And it calls to sporting England
As no other course can call.

W. H. O.

De Minimis.

IN the pleasant province of Valladolid a mule has been sentenced to ten days' imprisonment for kicking a man. This old Spanish custom applies not only to beasts but to things. Guns which explode unexpectedly are court-martialled and bayonets which refuse to come unput at the right moment are liable to be ceremonially condemned to the melting-pot.

England unfortunately allows the inanimate to escape the long arm of the law. It is no good going to the police-



Loyal Fan. "DON'T LOOK, DEAR. SHE'S TRAVELLING INCOGNITO."

court to take out a summons against your collar-stud for breach of contract. If you could, it might not have the effect of forcing the stud to come out of hiding, but at least it would satisfy your pride; and that is all most people expect from a summons.

Playing-cards may be the Devil's picture-books, but it is the golf-club which most often lays itself open to a criminal charge. I know a putter that has been guilty of inciting to blasphemy, a new mashie that does not give a fig for the Lord's Day Observance Act, and a niblick that once committed an assault on Colonel Bleed on the 14th green. At home we have a bath-tap which should be summoned as a private nuisance. It makes clucking and thumping noises all night. The tap might of course claim an easement; but even though it was put in in accordance with the regulations of the local council it has hardly a statutory right to keep me awake.

Domestic pets, save the mark! often resort to threats to gain their ends. What clearer case of duress could you have than that of the dog who threatens to bark the house down if you don't

take him out or the cat who claims an inalienable right to the best chair and upholds her claim with her claws? My dog too has run his head against the law of trover over and over again. He believes in the legal fallacy that finding is keeping and brings me the mat from next-door, or an odd bone that the dog at Number 10 has mislaid, with perfect confidence.

Plates that slip out of the housemaid's hand might well be charged with contributory negligence, while the behaviour of that new pack of cards, which during a whole evening never once supplies you with a decent hand, is a blatant case of failure of consideration. Another action worth fighting concerns the inferred contract between yourself and the eiderdown that it will stay on the bed all night, and its illegal desertion of you as soon as you close your eyes. Even more actionable is the failure of the average deck-chair to live up to its implied warranty of safety and the tendency to incite to suicide so marked in station waiting-rooms.

All over England there are men with a grievance. They tell you sadly, "I have always hated that picture," "That

beastly shoe spoilt my walk," "If it wasn't for the Ace of Clubs we should have made it." In England the law has little comfort for them. "*Caveat emptor*," it says, and leaves things at that. It holds too that the good of the State requires a man not to injure his own property; a pleasant thought when he is tempted to break his driver across his knee or jump on his top-hat.

If English law followed the reasonable Spanish custom and recognised the sinfulness of things in general and man's need of legal protection from his own *lares* and *penales* in particular, we should see some pretty cases before the Courts. There would be young Lord Toogood's action against his dress-tie for wrongful imprisonment, in which his Lordship would allege that the defendant had caused him to spend five mortal hours shut up in a bedroom when he should have been at a party. Another pretty case would be my own suit against my typewriter, the cause of action being that the said instrument did by its criminal negligence in the matter of spelling cause me to suffer grievous harm both in pocket and reputation.



THE SPREAD OF SARTORIAL NOMENCLATURE.

"WILL YOU WEAR THE COY CUTHBERT OR THE WILLIAM THE ROOSTER, MY LORD?"

Sweet are the Uses —

["An advertiser who does not tell the truth is liable to punishment."—Recent ruling of the Commercial Tribunal of Nice.]

THE merchant, when he's really out
To advertise his ware
(Though a religious man, no doubt),
Goes at it with an air;
Reviewed in strict regard to fact
His statements may be inexact,
But if they happen to attract
He doesn't seem to care.

But in the noble land of France
If he assert a claim
Tinged with the colours of romance
They bow his head in shame;
A guileless people shall not be
Diddled, they urge, by such as he;
And, probably, to you and me,
Theirs is a worthy aim.

And yet I know a man, and proud
I am to call him friend,
Whose days apparently are vowed
To one peculiar end;
Whene'er a new quack cure is cried
He knows no rest until he's tried
On his long-suffering inside
That fresh and boastful blend.

The nature of the rooted ill
(Or ills) concerns him not;
He takes his spoonful or a pill
And bolts it like a shot;
While as a fact the man is blest
With health and vigour of the best,
He feels a lively interest
In what he hasn't got.

No addict he. I've heard him say
With a disarming shrug,
When putting casually away
The last and loudest drug,
He could without a pang endure
The lack of that especial cure;
It's the seductive literature
That has him for a mug.

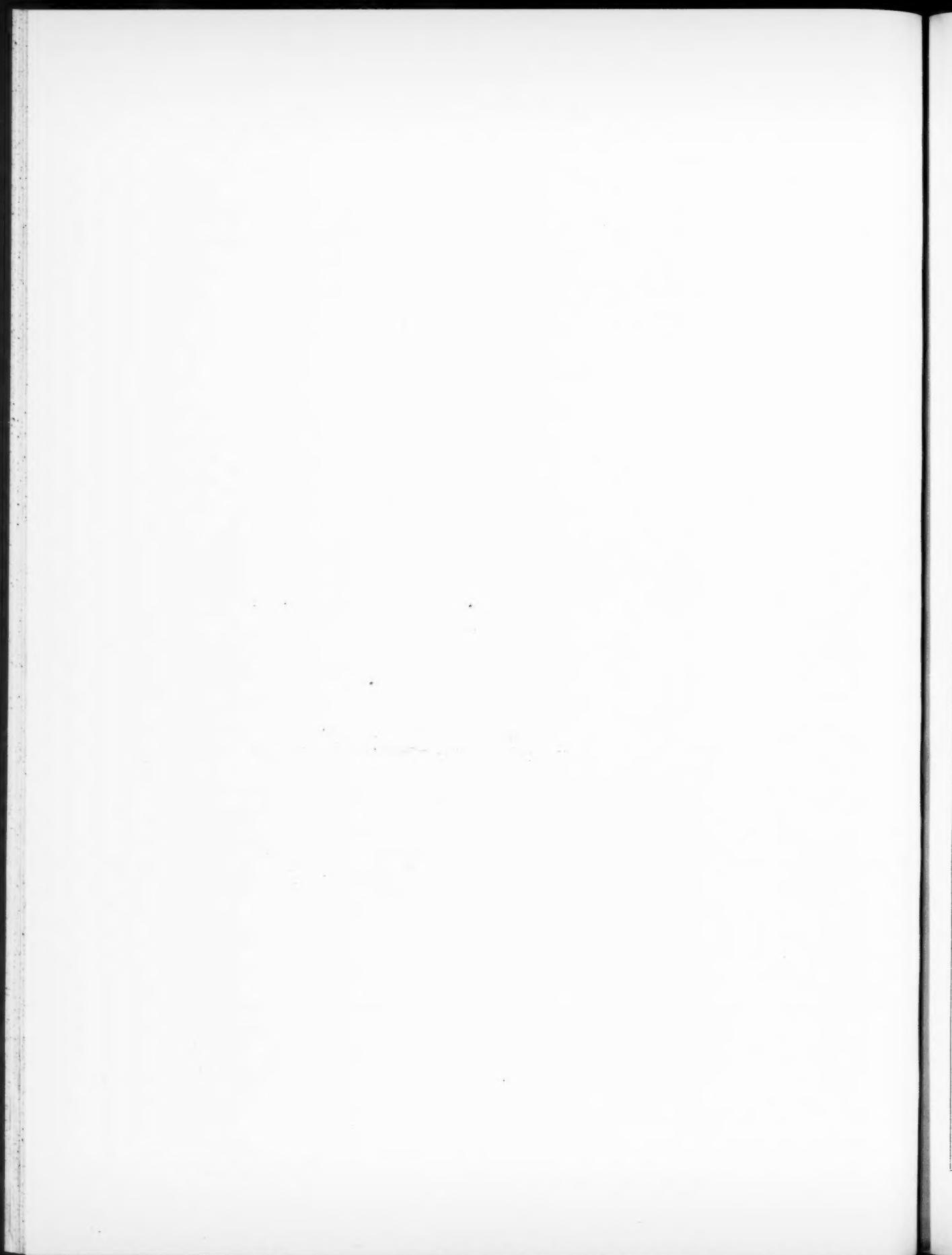
O Truth, that shinest like a star
Excelled perhaps by none,
Yet, if we're too particular,
Apt to be overdone,
Leave us, at all events in trade,
Bright Fancy with her iris-ed aid;
Rudely to call a spade a spade
Would cost a lot of fun.

DUM-DUM.



THE THREE ANTI-MUSKETEERS.

REPRESENTATIVES OF ENGLAND, FRANCE AND ITALY (*in various voices*). "CONFOUND THAT BOY!"



Essence of Parliament.

Monday, March 13th.—Lieut.-Colonel Sir WALTER SMILES asked the SECRETARY FOR INDIA if he were aware of the resentment felt in Assam over the fact that Assam oil contributed heavily to the central finances but did not benefit Assam. Sir SAMUEL HOARE said that this was one of the questions that would come before the Joint Select Committee.

The Committee will of course bear in mind the proverb that those who fish in troubled waters should never throw oil.

The House had some difficulty in restraining its feelings when Mr. MORGAN JONES (for Mr. RHYS DAVIES) asked the SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA what he was going to do about Afghanistan's embargo on foreign-made soap. Sir SAMUEL HOARE seemed to think that the position was adequately met by the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1921 and the Afghan Trade Convention of 1923. For some reason nobody thought of pointing out that both these agreements were made before KING AMANULLAH taught the Afghans to eat soap.

Blood exudes more readily from turnips than stolen British money from the Soviet Government's pocket, and the House was not surprised to learn, from what we may call a short but diverting history of the £13,000,000 Lena Goldfields Award read to it by Mr. BALDWIN, that a purely "derisory" offer of £1,000,000 (perhaps) was the most that had been wrung from the Soviet Government in a series of intermittent negotiations.

These Russians do not realise that British patience is as long as the winter night. The Government is prepared to go on having that money owed to Lena Goldfields, Ltd., until Moscow is quite worn out with not paying it.

Meanwhile Mr. BALDWIN was unable to give the House any information about the arrest of British officials of the Metropolitan-Vickers Company, Ltd., and the raids on its premises by the OGPU. "Derisory" explanations will doubtless be forthcoming in due course.

Sheer cynicism must have prompted Mr. NUNN to ask the Secretary of the Overseas Trade Department if his attention had been called to efforts of the Chinese to develop aircraft as

an efficient means of transport. He probably had in mind the story of the soldier who was stopped by an officer while legging it from the field of battle. "What are you running for, you coward?" angrily demanded the officer. "Because I can't fly, you block-head," replied the other, and sped on his way.

"The Department of Overseas Trade," replied Lieutenant-Colonel COLVILLE smoothly, "loses no opportunity of bringing the superior quality of British

OPPOSITION, explained that, as no other Government showed any signs of chipping in, no useful purpose would be served by continuing the Far East Arms Embargo, which would therefore be raised as from that day.

"This country, in my opinion, set a great example," declared the LEADER OF THE HOUSE in tones more apologetic than proud.

Mr. BALDWIN added that the Government intended "vigorously to pursue the conversations already begun,"

which rather recalls the answer of the bright Boy-Scout who, when asked if he found himself being stalked by a lion what steps he would take, replied "Mighty long ones."

In moving the Second Reading of the Agricultural Marketing Bill, Major ELLIOT, whose courage and frankness were handsomely acknowledged by his critics as well as by his supporters, began with the candid admission that "the spectacle of a Minister of Agriculture introducing such a Bill excited the liveliest apprehension in the minds of every section of the community."

None the less, Major ELLIOT made a strong case for his Bill, pointing out that the British farmer could not compete with the foreign specialist producing under the most advantageous conditions, still less with what was in effect a wholesale disposal in our markets of foreign bankrupt stock. To try to organise British agriculture and at the same time put no sort of check or restriction on imported foreign produce was not common sense. This Bill was designed to rationalise the marketing of all agricultural produce, domestic or imported.

But that, said Mr. TOM WILLIAMS and other carping critics of the Bill, was just what it did not do. Instead of having an Imports Board to fix quotas, it was left to the Board of Trade by piecemeal agreements to limit the inflow of foreign agricultural produce. The result of the MINISTER's kindly desire to raise prices both for the foreign and the home producer might be to put nine pounds in the former's pocket to one pound in the latter's, always assuming that the added price did not, as in fact it probably would, go into the pockets of the importers and middlemen.

Between those who saw the MIN-



HOT ON THE SCENT.

MR. BALDWIN AND SIR JOHN SIMON.

[Mr. BALDWIN, in his statement on the removal of the Arms Embargo, said that "it was the Government's intention vigorously to pursue the conversations already begun."]

aircraft to the notice of the Chinese Government." It does not appear, however, that the Department seized an obvious opportunity by giving General TANG YU-LIN a free trial run.

Sir KINGSLEY WOOD had a Question to answer about telephonists. "Should not the right hon. gentleman pronounce the word 'telefōnist' and not 'teléfōnist'?" asked Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE. "No, Sir," replied the MINISTER, conscious, no doubt, that, being in a position to sack the B.B.C. Pronunciation Committee, he is in a position practically unassailable.

Mr. BALDWIN, answering a Private Notice Question by the LEADER OF THE

ISTER emerging from the Bill as an "Autocrat of the Dinner-table," as Mr. ROTHSCHILD put it, and those who, agreeing with *Jorrocks* (and the Marquis of TITCHFIELD) that "pigs is for profit, not loss," urged that as long as the Bill "increased the birth and growing-up of British pigs" the sooner it came into operation the better, the whole question, from porcine obstetrics (dwelt upon by Sir F. ACLAND) to the Triumph of Collectivism (applauded by Sir JOSEPH LAMB), was thoroughly thrashed out. Nevertheless the House is to have another day of it.

Tuesday, March 14th.—The SPEAKER announced the names of the four Members—Messrs. GODFREY LOCKER-LAMPSON, NEIL MACLEAN, Sir JOHN GANZONI and Sir M. MCKENZIE WOOD—who, with Sir DENIS HERBERT and Sir HORACE DAWKINS, Clerk of the House, will form a Technical Committee on Procedure. Their terms of reference, the SPEAKER explained, will not be to alter the Standing Orders but to clarify them. As Chairman of the Kitchen Committee, Sir JOHN GANZONI should be specially qualified to say whether Orders are thick or clear.

Air Ministers are famous for the eloquence with which, when the Estimates crop up, they sing the praises of the British airman by land and sea; and certainly they have ample material to work on. For the R.A.F., once the boundary into Asia is passed, as Sir PHILIP SASSOON reminded us, becomes something more than a symbol of British power. It becomes, like KIPLING's marine, a "giddy harumfright," a sort of composite postman, policeman, hospital orderly, Carter Paterson, surveyor, locust-detector, wreck-finder, taxi-cab, St. Bernard dog and *deus ex machina* all rolled into one. As witness the air squadron stationed at Aden, which, the MINISTER said, in 1932 flew 430,000 miles, largely on "pacific and productive activities."

Unfortunately these handsome and well-deserved eulogies must still be prefaced with the information that at the harsh dictates of economy the British air arm ranks only fifth among the air forces of the Powers, and is not being kept up to strength even on that meagre basis.

This meagreness provided the keynote of Mr. CHURCHILL's speech. The Air Force, he pointed out, did not exist primarily to chase locusts and drop blankets into the laps of needy tribesmen. A strong Air Force would do two things, said the Member for Epping, it would be an adequate defence (in spite of Mr. BALDWIN's jeremiads) of our shores in time of war, and would mean-

while enable us to steer clear of Continental entanglements. Disarmament would have just the opposite effect. If the French disarmed to any extent at

hand in Continental disputes. At the moment even to tender France, as the PRIME MINISTER was supposed to be busy doing, the advice to disarm was to assume altogether too much responsibility.

Mr. MANDER wept like anything to see such quantities of military aeroplanes, and sighed for their abolition. Mr. WHITESIDE, on the other hand, urged that, if the nations were not allowed to drop bombs on each other from military aeroplanes, they would soon be dropping germs on each other from commercial ones. A pessimistic view to take of human nature, but nature in a row, as has been justly observed, is seldom mild.

Wednesday, March 15th.—The Lords, having coped with the Committee Stage of the London Transport Bill, heard Lord KINNOULL's timely plea for further legislation regulating the hours and conditions of lorry-drivers. Lord PLYMOUTH agreed that "the less scrupulous type of employer" largely disregarded the provision of the Road Traffic Act, and said the matter would be dealt with when the Government introduced its Bill dealing with the Salter Report.

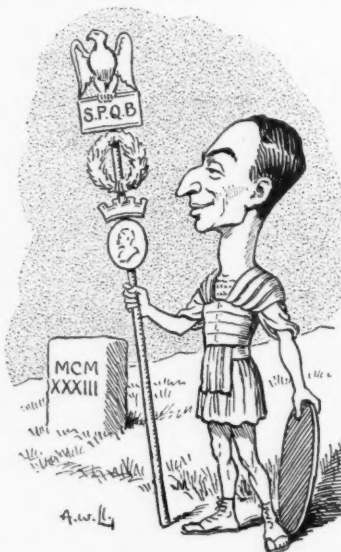
In the Commons Mr. BALDWIN described the position in respect of the arrested British employees of the Metropolitan-Vickers Company, and said the Ambassador at Moscow had been instructed to point out that "unfortunate consequences to Anglo-Soviet relations would follow" unless the matter was rectified.

The Soviet Ambassador had been too busy to go to the Foreign Office that day (having, in fact, a more important engagement at the cinema), but when he could manage to call similar language would be addressed to him.

Mr. GRAHAM WHITE's Private Member's Motion on the subject of the World Economic Conference led, as all motions do that have no definite objective, to a rather vague debate. Mr. WHITE and fellow-Liberals used the occasion to flog Old Uncle Tom COBDEN's all-too-dead mare. Sir HENRY PAGE-CROFT and other Conservatives pleaded for more effective tariffs.

Mr. BOOTHBY pleaded for an expanded market for his constituents' oats and herrings, and Major LLOYD GEORGE, whose parliamentary manner is beginning to take on some of the polish of his distinguished father's, pleaded almost tearfully with the Government for another "lead."

Mr. RUNCIMAN remarked that the World Economic Conference could not be held too soon for him.



"PAX BRITANNICA"; OR, DEFENCE BY AIR.

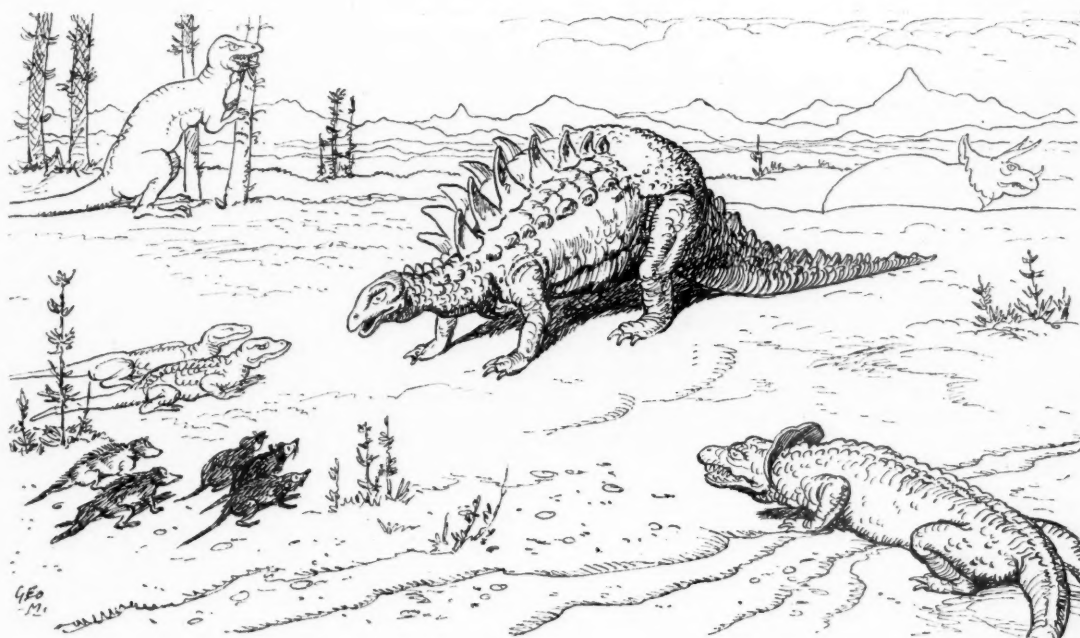
SIR PHILIP SASSOON (Assistant Imperial Eagle-Bearer).

our urgent request they would be able to say, if trouble arose, "You are involved in this with us," and we should at all costs avoid being involved before-



"He sobbed and he sighed, and a gurgle he gave . . ."

MAJOR TIT-WILLOW LLOYD GEORGE LAMENTING THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S AFFAIRS.



The Stegosaur. "MY FRIENDS, WE LIVE IN A WORLD OF CHANGE. IT IS WITH PAIN THAT I OBSERVE AMONGST US SOME WHO ARE NOT HUNDRED-PER-CENT. REPTILES."

The Uses of Brevity.

It was well for the ancient *D.T.*

In its gorgeously green "Sala(d)" days
To indulge with exuberant glee
In the circumlocutory phrase.

Now, faced with the dolc and the axe,
We must practise the creed that we preach.
Refuse to be lavish and lax
And resolve to economise speech.

To-day we can learn from the Boy
In the street, with two words—only two:
The rude objurgatory "Oy!"
And the blandly contemptuous "Coo!"

And this brevity gladly I own
Is not wholly confined to the young;
It composes the sinews and bone
Of our new conversational tongue.

Those who care for our bodies and souls
Have long been the "Doc." and the "Rev.";
The Hidalgo whom Erin extols
Is commonly shortened to "Dev."

The Peer, as Lord BANBURY tells,
No matter how swiftly he skips,
Is never immune from the yells
Of "Yah!" from the lorryman's lips.

Our Pressmen, enamoured of pep,
Shun sesquipedalian verbs;
Only publishers fail to keep step
And cling to bombastical blurbs.

It is plain that the maxim, "Be shorter,"
And the general "urge" to be brief
Must cause the descriptive reporter
Some perfectly natural grief;

And yet, though the penny-a-liner
May find pennies harder to catch,
"No matter," things greater and finer
Were lost "on the field of Mohács."

C. L. G.

Mr. Punch on Tour.

THE Collection of original Drawings by JOHN LEECH, CHARLES KEENE, Sir JOHN TENNIEL and GEORGE DU MAURIER, and of reproductions of Famous Cartoons, Forecasts and other exhibits from *Punch*, is on view at Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, until April 2; at the Art Gallery, Hereford, April 8 to May 20; at Liverpool, May 27 to June 11; at Halifax, June 17 to July 15; at Wrexham, July 24 to August 12; and at Bath, August 26 to September 23.

A separate Exhibition of Prints depicting humorous situations between Doctor and Patient will be on view at the City Art Gallery, York, from April 1 to 29; at Gateshead, May 13 to June 10; at Burton-on-Trent, June 24 to July 22; and at Bolton, August 5 to September 2.

Invitations to visit either of these Exhibitions at any of the above places will be gladly sent to readers if they will apply to the Secretary, "Punch" Office, 10, Bouverie Street, E.C.4.

"Wilhelmina Stitch is the lecturer at this evening's meeting of St. Helier's Church Literary Society. The title of the lecture is 'Silver Linings,' which is described as breezy and enchanting. Non-members admitted on payment of 2s. and 1s."—*Jersey Paper*. Silver linings of two sizes.

Charles Finds the Real Life of Spain.

ON arrival at Majorca, Charles, who is an old Mediterranean traveller (having taken the Fourteen-Day to Marseilles, Monaco, Balearics, Algiers and Gibraltar last year while I was Seeing Britain First at Eastbourne), said that here was the only place where one could still see what he called the Real Life of Spain.

Apparently there was no real life in Barcelona or Seville—just a lot of hotels and cafés and shops and things, but no real life at all. I gathered that the fellows were getting ruined these days, dressing just like anybody else and driving about in American cars without a mantilla or guitar in a thousand.

But in Majorca one still saw the Spaniard (why do people talk as though there were only one?) at his best—simple, primitive and tradition-loving. Well, the driver Charles engaged on the *quai* at Palma was both the last two. He said forty pesetas for a round-trip of the capital had always been his tradition; and after Charles had said "*Mucho caro*" for the third time I fancy he became primitive too. Fortunately Charles didn't understand. The fellow wasn't speaking proper Spanish at all, he whispered, but some sort of dialect one met here. (It's the most useful accomplishment in the world to be able to recognise one of these dialects at once.) But after the chorus—two policemen with revolvers, one Guardia Civil with a rifle, a lottery-seller, an American artist in a blue short and two small boys with yo-yos—had all explained his error with varying simplicity, Charles got into the carriage and we drove off.

It was an admirable carriage, with those kind of reclining cushions that are made to lie back on and smile with amiable condescension at the simple natives who couldn't possibly afford fourteen-guinea trips. Charles caught the atmosphere at once, and bagged the first picturesque native—a shaggy ancient in a deplorable drill-suit—before I could with a "Wonderful primitive type one sees here; unchanged for centuries, you know.

Wonder what that fellow'd think of Piccadilly?" Unfortunately the ancient heard this and showed what he thought of Charles by brandishing an infuriated *Continental Daily Mail* at him.

Charles was silent for a long time, then, while we saw the bull-ring (reinforced concrete with automatic ticket-machines), seven talking cinemas ("*El Magnifico Harold Loyd, Gran Passion, Constance Benit*"), an assorted array of gigantic cafés, wireless-shops selling tambourines marked "A Present from Palma," newspaper kiosks displaying two local and countless other English journals, and one man in blue knee-breeches and a guitar singing in a narrow street of barred windows. (Charles had great hopes of him, but he

limited Fourteen-Day Cruises and the cruisers as well and read a translation of *The Forsyte Saga* as he ate, Charles was still in full flood about the glories of Old Spain.

It was unfortunate that in the middle of a rhapsodic description of that great unchanging Spanish spectacle, the bull-fight, an unsuspected loud-speaker should have burst into a syncopated version from Barcelona of "Ay, Ay, Ay," but—I give him credit for it—his wince was almost imperceptible; and as we emerged into the riot of traffic of the main boulevard he became almost poetic as he assured me that here at last could be seen the traditional unchanging character of Spain, untainted by modern ideas or commercialism and seen only at its best in Majorca, where the finest bulls were bred and the honour of fighting was jealously handed from father to son.

* * * * *

I did my best to divert his attention, but the poster, huge and multi-coloured, was directly facing us. Under a representation of two motorcyclists tilting at charging bulls, it screamed to the world (in dialect, of course, but terribly understandable) that Mister — and Mister — would to-morrow fight Four Beautiful and Savage Bulls. There was also something about the Comic Black-face Band engaging three more beautiful bulls, but Charles didn't wait to see.

* * * * *

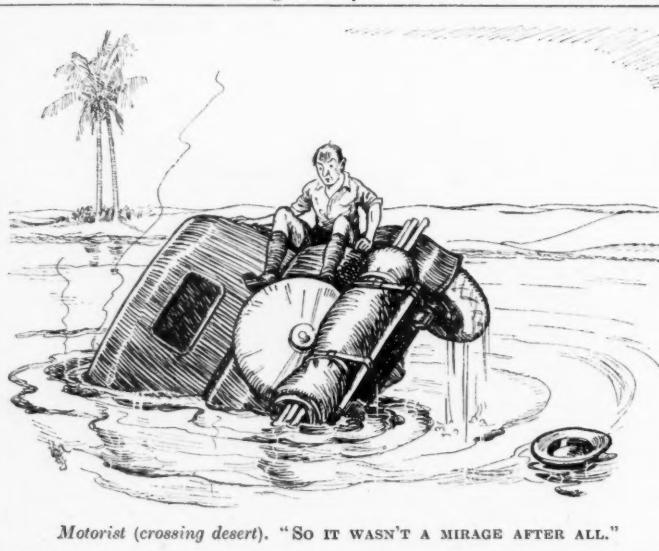
Some people are never beaten. The same evening, after we had weighed anchor for Malaga, I heard Charles talking to someone in the smoking-room. "... absolutely ruined, of course," I caught. "Not the real life of Spain at all. I always say Malaga is the only place..."

One of these days someone is going to push Charles under a real-life Spanish tram.

Macabre Humour in the I.O.M.

"DOUGLAS FINANCES.

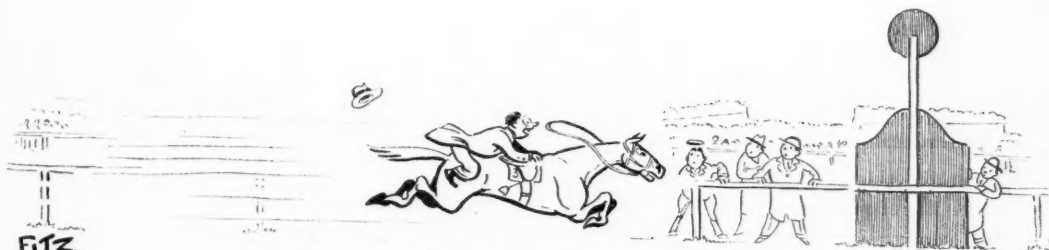
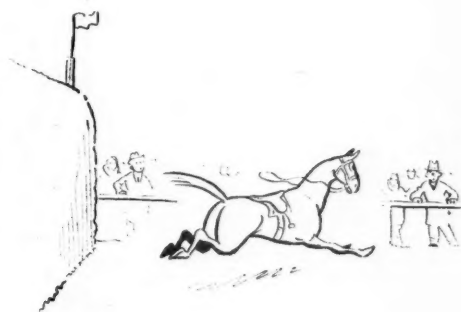
Cemetery.—We have carefully considered the fees charged for opening and closing and bricking of graves and also prices charged for the sale of grave spaces, and desire to call the attention of the Council to the advisability of referring this matter to the Public Amusements Committee for further consideration."—*Manx Paper*.



Motorist (crossing desert). "SO IT WASN'T A MIRAGE AFTER ALL."

turned out to be advertising one of the aforementioned cinemas—Danon Ravarro in *Spanish Fashion*, I think). Well, Charles got a bit depressed until I said of course things had changed a lot since the Revolution, and anyway I understood the mountains were simply stiff with genuine Majorcan bandits.

By the middle of lunch, which we took in what Charles gleefully described to me as a five-hundred-year-old Spanish *bodega*, where the wine one drank came from gigantic flasks of the same age ranged round the wall, and candles on the table and a smoking brazier on the stone floor provided the only light, Charles had regained his form. Even when the place gradually filled up with two maiden guide-books, a Teuton camera, one dyspeptic Chicago Tribune, who called for—and got—iced water, and a rotund Majorcan who looked as though he could buy un-



THE SUBSTITUTE.

At the Play.

"ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT WINGS" (EMBASSY).

MR. EUGENE O'NEILL, chartered libertine among dramatists, always gets his effects in his own way, making his own rules, infuriating the formalists, often needlessly holding up the march of his action but not letting us escape without having forced us to share the emotion which he has himself deeply felt.

A second hearing of *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, epitome of the tragedy of the mixing of white and black blood, confirms the impression of an unnecessarily untidy play wavering awkwardly between symbolism and the starkest realism and, the uncertain preparation over, working up to its climax with an almost unbearable tension and poignancy. I don't suppose I was the only seasoned adult male who furtively wiped away the trickling tear as the curtain fell on those two tortured souls, the lovable sensitive negro, *Jim Harris*, and the poor little outcast white wife, *Ella Downey*, the dreadful paroxysm of her violent mania spent, resting broken and childishly babbling in his sheltering arms.

MR. O'NEILL rapidly sketches the early history of his *Jim* and *Ella* in four short scenes set in a mean street of lower New York. In the first we are shown, with much coming and going of down-town types, the little negro youth and his adored white playmate (played with a remarkably sure touch by MR. LEONARD SMOOTHY and Miss JOAN DUAN); nine years later, *Jim* and *Ella* meeting (here MR. PAUL ROBESON and Miss FLORA ROBSON take up the parts), *Jim* still faithful, *Ella* (mistress of the Irish pugilist bully, *Mickey*) turning contemptuously against her old playmate, taking the tone from her white associates. Another five years pass; *Jim*, law student, ambitious but ineffectual, is weighed down by his acute sense of race inferiority and isolation. *Ella*, abandoned by her bully, turns to her one loyal friend. A week later the two, bride and groom, come down the church steps between a silent hostile crowd—formally posed, the whites ranged on one side, the blacks on the other. They are leaving America, unable to face the bitter music.

In two years they are back in lower New York in the flat of *Jim's* mother. And here MR. O'NEILL sets himself with a fierce headlong zeal to drive home his points in a mood of horrific realism.

The décor of MR. BAGNALL HARRIS conforms with the altered mood. In the four street scenes of the First Act

we saw in the foreground crazy tenelements with rhomboidal windows and cock-eyed shutters, the topless towers of Upper New York reeling drunkenly in the distance—a reaction possibly to the banking crisis. Within the modest decent flat our sane human prejudice for the perpendicular and horizontal is



ROBESON AGONISTES.

gratified, and we may confess to an unfashionable doubt of the wisdom of the earlier vagaries.

The two short years have aged the unhappy *Jim*. *Ella*, shrinking more and more into herself and away from the actual and still more from the morbidly imagined criticism and contempt of outsiders, is on the very verge of losing



Ella Downey (Miss FLORA ROBSON) WITH AN UNHAPPY PREDILECTION FOR CARVING-KNIVES.

her reason. The little old negress, *Mrs. Harris* (most plausibly impersonated by Miss CICELY OATES), looks on unhappily; her daughter, asserting the bitter pride of her despised race against her diminished brother, finds it hard to have anything but hatred for the unhappy *Ella*—Miss MARJORY CLARK gives a keen edge to her rendering of this part, which is admirably planned to show us the strong deep currents of racial antagonism.

As we approach the climax of the tragic complication Miss ROBSON and MR. ROBESON find themselves with a situation which enables them to cast a spell over us, to create that rare illusion of our being rapt away from the theatre and absorbed in the agony of imaginary characters that have assumed an intense life. I shall not easily forget Miss ROBSON's *Ella*, muttering by the window, the savage, distraught colloquy with the grotesque mask upon the wall; the pathetic alternations of her maniac hatred and her real love, which is always struggling to assert itself; the ugly dreadful venom of the "dirty nigger" which she spits out at the broken patient man at the very crisis of her seizure—all this most sensitively controlled so that no false note is struck to shatter the painful illusion.

MR. PAUL ROBESON played the seemingly subordinate but actually the more fundamentally tragic part in this poignant interlude with a passionate intensity which was overwhelming. The audience had positively to pull itself together before it could offer its tribute of stormy applause to these two fine artists.

There was a certain raggedness in the earlier scenes, due to the inexperience of the large crowd of secondary players (I except from this the *Mickey* of MR. ROY EMERTON and his lieutenant, *Shorty*, played by MR. GEORGE PUGHE) and perhaps a little to the author's loose handling. But if the end really crowns the work, this, greatly moving, is a great play. T.

At the Variety.

EAST-END AMATEURS (NEW SCALA).

LAST year Mr. Punch visited and was much impressed by the first variety performance of the EAST-END AMATEURS, and having just witnessed their second annual entertainment, which was honoured by the presence of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of YORK, I see no reason why he need alter his opinion.

The English stage has drawn widely and memorably on the Cockney, and now, when the full glories of 'Awkins-

ism are being undermined by the twin levellers broadcasting and education, it seems a peculiarly happy idea to provide an opportunity for East-End theatrical talent to show itself and possibly graduate for the regular music-halls.

The mainspring and originator of the movement is the Rev. VINCENT HOWSON, an experienced actor. His policy has been to give a trial to any East-Enders willing to do a turn, and, after making his selection, to coach and encourage while leaving the native characteristics as far as possible untouched. Over five hundred auditions and who knows how much judgment and patience went to the latest programme; and I can truly say that it did him very great credit. I have seen a good many less pleasing West-End Varieties in which highly-paid artistes took part.

Its strength lay partly in the number of genuinely gifted children whom Mr. Howson has discovered—children displaying such real, if occasionally crude, ability and such instinctive stage-sense that one is almost driven to the extravagance of predicting for them a theatrical future; and partly in the refreshing absence from any of the turns of the jaded clichés of manner and presentation which so often cloud the West-End performance. The only traditions animating these amateurs were those of Cockney humour and Cockney unselfconsciousness. They depended on no elaborate settings or trick lighting, having indeed nothing beyond a simple back-curtain and their own nimble wits and limbs and voices; nor did they need them. It says a great deal, I think, for their discretion and for that of their producer when little girls of nine, who have never faced an audience before, throw themselves into their parts with obvious enjoyment and yet with no coyness whatever. And not only nine. JOYCE MABEY is a grave little *cantatrice* of four, and, quite alone, she appeared perfectly ready to sing to us all night.

One prophecy I will make, and it concerns an eccentric dancer named Mr. HARRY GEE. If he is not fairly soon delighting music-hall audiences and winning renown for himself I will publicly consume the most inedible hat which can be procured. He has everything he should have—a long angular body, a true feeling for rhythm, a poker-joker face and, above all, originality. I

am told he wishes to become a professional. I cannot believe that there need be much difficulty about that.

After him Miss VALERIE TANDY must be mentioned. Her "Chinese Dance" was a clever and polished piece of work which was altogether delightful, and Mrs. COLLIN'S School is to be congratulated on her training.

A satirical recitation by Miss NELLIE HUGHES was also one of the best things on the long and varied programme. She was a very young lady, and was crazy to go on the movies. Perhaps one day she will, for she has personality and a nice dash of comic malice that some of the others haven't got.



A MILD NAVY CUT.

MR. HARRY GEE AND MR. SYD HAROLD.

The pupils of Miss MAUDE WELLS' School of Dancing presented a series of short turns which included a finished performance by Miss LUCY LOWDELL, the champion child step-dancer, and one by three small girls in male evening clothes, who put on top-hats and took off musical comedy, dancing extremely well.

If Mr. Howson were to receive sufficient encouragement I think he might possibly arrange more frequent performances and even put them on for several nights; but I gather that in any case it is his intention to have another show in 1934. It is a long time to wait, but, if you like the description of what has now passed beyond an interesting experiment into an institution of real theatrical value, it is worth remembering.

ERIC.

Fifty Years On.

To the Editor of "Punch."

March 15th, 1983.

DEAR SIR,—Turning through the pages of your volumes of fifty years ago I was greatly amused by an article written in March, 1933, by "A. P. H.," in which the famous moralist seemed to lament the growing intricacy of the public telephone-booths of his day.

"Telephone boxes cum dialling" he rather quaintly calls them, and he pictures the bewilderment of the man-in-the-street on being confronted with one of these absurd old contraptions.

He was writing, of course, some twenty years before the Post-Office Radio-Television Boxes were even dreamt of, and it is amusing to wonder what "A. P. H." would have thought if he had been suddenly given a vision of our modern "phone" box and told to "get contact" with, say, a friend in Tokio.

If Buttons A and B took a bit of getting used to, what would he have thought of our focussing-handles, our close-up, full-length, landscape controls, the automatic debiting of the charge to our bank-balances *via* Universal Bank, Ltd., and the other inventions of a half-century's progress in the radio-television world?

We are so apt to take these things for granted that it is difficult to imagine what they would have thought of a "vision box" in 1933. Even had he appreciated its usefulness it is doubtful whether the proverbially impatient "A. P. H." could ever have been trained to control its mechanism. Personally

I believe he would have taken one long look at it and then thrown himself off Waterloo Bridge into his beloved Thames. (This was before the Thames had been so cleverly diverted from reaching London by the Power Waterway and General Utilities Co. Inc., of New York.)

Such musings are inevitably conjured up by the perusal of your historic volumes, a pursuit which I can heartily recommend to your readers. In these dark days it is some consolation at least to know that they had their little worries and troubles even in the "grand old 'thirties."

Yours, etc., J. H. B.

How to enjoy *Punch* without reading DICKENS. See page 310.

The Phylloxera.

AND what *is* the phylloxera?

Well, I heard about it for the first time yesterday, but unfortunately only one sentence, and that—spoken by my host at luncheon—was not addressed to me.

" . . . After all," he said, "we live in a post-phylloxera age."

That in itself was news to me. I knew we lived in a post-war age, of course, but it was the first I'd heard of our being post-phylloxera as well.

Was this good or bad?

Obviously the answer must turn upon the—to me—vexed question of the phylloxera's exact place in the scheme of Creation. My first (perhaps rather morbid) idea was connected with disease.

"They say that the phylloxera epidemic is pretty bad up in London."

"I wouldn't let the children go to the pantomime if I were you with all this phylloxera about."

"If you're going upstairs, James, bring me the aspirin. . . . I'm dreadfully afraid I may have a touch of phylloxera."

It all seemed very natural and lifelike, but there again, was it quite fair to take it for granted that the phylloxera was the enemy of man? It might, on the contrary, be the friend of man—more like the dog.

"Really, this Phylloxera is too wonderful. I've only been taking it a week and I feel a different creature."

"Mrs. Ruby Ruggins, of 287, Gladys Terrace, West Hartlepool, writes as follows: 'When little Constance Patricia was eleven-and-a-half weeks old she weighed exactly four ounces. I put her on Phylloxera. . . . She is now as bonny a baby . . .'"

"The best years of life are those between eighty and one hundred. Take Phylloxera and be young at ninety-six."

Fancy then took another turn. Why all this preoccupation with health? Why not go back to nature?

"Have you seen the blue phylloxera at the flower-show? My dear, too lovely! I'm ordering some for the rock-garden at once."

"And *these* are those dear little phylloxera [phylloxera—phylloxeras?]. I'm so fond of the *scented* variety always. . . ."

"No, darling, take away the phylloxera and put it in the hall. Auntie is *used* to the aspidistra and doesn't care about these new-fangled plants."

"The bridesmaids carried Victorian posies of pink phylloxera and green (as usual) smilax."

That was rather pretty and I liked it.

I was less pleased with imagination's next caper, ingenious though some people might have called it.

"You remember, no doubt, what Phylloxera wrote upon the subject many hundred years in advance of PLATO?"



"WHY, I DO BELIEVE I'VE GOT A WISDOM TOOTH COMIN', JARGE."
"WELL, LOOK AT THE MILD WEATHER WE'VE BIN 'AVIN'."

"Ah, I see that you are a disciple of Phylloxera . . ."

"Remind me, dear, after dinner, to look up that passage in Phylloxera, which should make clear to you the exact position of the Phœnicians with regard to the Peloponnesians at the date of which we are speaking."

On the whole this interpretation definitely lacked charm.

I took refuge in the wonders of Science. (After all, there's no end to them, and they might just as well include the phylloxera as all the other things.)

"They say that Upper Finland is the best place from which to observe the phylloxera. I shall be there, of course, with my telescope at midnight on the 24th of June next."

" . . . Nothing at all . . . the merest trifle . . . only my little pamphlet on that amazing astronomical phenom-

enon, the Land of the Midnight Phylloxera."

"No, darling, it isn't the *moon* exactly; it's called the phylloxera, and it travels 157,000,000 times faster than light and 6,978,000,000 times faster than sound; and now you know all about it, so go to sleep like a good boy. . . ."

But the thing couldn't go on. It had to stop. Alps and Alps arose and so on, and Reason herself was tottering upon her throne—if you could call it a throne.

So one just said to one's neighbour, quite quietly and registering a passing uncertainty rather than a fathomless ignorance:—

"Oh, about this business of our living in such a thoroughly post-phylloxera age—which of course we *are*, one does so completely realise—tell me, what exactly do *you* mean by the word phylloxera?"

There was a rather tense silence. I drank some perfectly cold water and Nature—the phylloxera included—more or less stood still.

Then the answer came. "The Phylloxera," my neighbour said kindly and readily, "is closely related to the aphids."

And Aphids, I suppose, must be Phylloxera.

E. M. D.

A Doggy Diocese.

"The annual meeting of the Northampton and District Canine Society was held at the Stag's Head Hotel, on Thursday . . . Mr. — and Mr. — were appointed delegates to the Ruridecanal conference."—*Local Paper*.

The Army of To-day.

(It is stated that there is at present one donkey on the strength of the British Army.)

Most honoured animal, if you could speak,

Would you not boast about your rôle unique?

I wish you could, for then you might explain

How it has chanced that you alone remain.

Oh, what a glorious change has come to pass

If in the Army now is but one ass!

W. K. H.

A Modern Idyll.

(According to a Society Gossip in a daily paper, this season "every hostess is paying more attention to the question of sitting-out accommodation, where young couples can recapture the glamour of a less sophisticated age.")

HE.

WELL, here we are *tous seuls*, we two;
And, if the quaint tradition's true,
I gather I should gape at you
With amorous sheep's-eyes,
And from my chest emit a few
Dreadfully deep sighs.

SHE.

I, Sir, if rumour be correct,
Should prove (at first) most circumspect,
Nor offer hints that I detect
Your crude advances,
Which, if with veiled decorum checked,
Heighten one's chances.

HE.

And I should take you at your word,
Chatter away in an absurd
Manner of things we've seen and heard,
Then cease my airy
Discursiveness and, deeply stirred,
Sigh out, "Oh, Mary!"

SHE.

My glances I should next let fall,
Drop maidenly reserve and all;
And, re-escorted to the Ball,
To end your sorrow,
Coily remark, "Yes, you may call,
Harry, to-morrow."

HE.

It may be just a passing craze,
Dished up from those departed days
Our elders feel they ought to praise—
I don't deny it;
Still, just to test their guileless ways,
What if we try it? A. K.

The Side-Line.

He had been hanging round her all the evening, trying to pluck up courage to ask the question that trembled on his lips. He had danced with her four times, and each time he had just cleared his throat to begin the oration when the music stopped and her next partner came to claim her.

Perhaps they had better sit out the next dance? In the quiet of the conservatory it might be easier to speak, although a refusal would have been less embarrassing while they were whirling gaily on the floor.

She had no objection to missing the next dance. Indeed, blushing slightly, she said that five minutes in



Policeman. "WELL, WHAT PART OF WHITECHAPEL DO YOU WANT?"
The Perfect Stranger. "AH, YOU VILL KNOW. ID IZZ A SCHREET VID A JEWISH SHOP VERE DEY SELL CLOES."

the cool conservatory was just what she needed.

He sat by her side and gazed at her dumbly. Then, with a nervous cough, he took the plunge.

"You know, Mabel," he said, "that I am not earning a very large income at present. Business has been bad and I have had to go in for various side-lines to make both ends meet. Bearing that in mind, may I ask you a question?"

Mabel looked down at her feet. "Go on," she said faintly.

"Although I am not rich, I think

you will agree that I bear a character for honesty and straightforwardness?"

"Yes—go on!"

He could beat about the bush no longer. Beads of perspiration stood out on his brow and he clutched the seat with a damp hand. "Will you, as an old friend, let me show you an entirely new line in silk stockings?"

CAN YOU DO WITHOUT DICKENS?

Details of Mr. Punch's great free offer to Railway Travellers will be found on page 310.



Returned Native. "WHAT HAPPENED TO BOB MITCHELL?"
Ancient. "WENT TO TH' BOER WAR. AIN'T SEEN 'IM ABOUT SINCE."

Our Booking-Office.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

"The Austrian."

ENSHRINED in English hearts by BURKE's panegyric of her appearance "just above the horizon," *Marie Antoinette* (GOLLANCZ, 10/6) is usually credited with at least a felicitous youth. As a matter of fact, the tears shed by all Vienna when she left home to be married at fifteen ushered in a girlhood of loneliness and intimidation to which the last days of the "WIDOW CAPET" were no more than a climax. To Paris—the equally ghoulis Paris of courts and slums—"the Austrian" was always a detested foreigner; and while her royal grandfather-in-law turned aside from his preoccupation with the DU BARRY to catechize her on her relations with her husband, the fishwives of the market—fifteen years before the Revolution—taunted her with the childlessness which as a matter of fact was no fault of hers. Miss KATHARINE ANTHONY, whose biography runs on domestic lines rather than on implications of statecraft, has set her ill-fated heroine very cleverly into both Austrian and Parisian circles. Her vignettes of the lonely woman's few friends, from DE LAMBALLE and AXEL FERSEN to the maid who ironed her cap-strings in the Conciergerie, are delicately and memorably drawn; and she enjoys to the full any legitimately amusing side-issue—such as the final escape of the royal aunts (probably the originators of the "Austrian" nickname) to Rome. Notorious set-pieces, such as the tale of the Diamond Necklace and the dash for Varennes, are given their due place and no more, with the result that the biography remains businesslike, well-proportioned and of considerable cumulative power.

"Normal but Vigorous."

Our writers of autobiography must be beginning to find the supply of provocative and novel titles wearing rather thin. *This was my World* (MACMILLAN, 10/6) is the choice of Viscountess RHONDDA, who would have us believe that it is merely the life-history of a normal but vigorous person whom chance set free from the prison into which she had been sedulously moulded in accordance with the best Victorian tradition. MARGARET HAIG THOMAS was an only child, who insisted on going to school at St. Andrews, which she enjoyed, and to college at Somerville, which she did not. Then she married a Conservative and Master of Hounds and (as good wives were taught to do in those days) strove to become a nominal Conservative herself and religiously went out hunting. For she wore a surface air of meekness that deceived many, including perhaps herself. When, later, she was sent to prison as a militant suffragette for burning the contents of a letter-box, one at least of her connections by marriage refused to believe that so gentle a creature should suddenly have become so fierce. But the real turning-point of her life came one evening not long after her marriage when her father suddenly decided to test her qualities as a business associate—and she stepped into a position that was something between his highly-confidential secretary and a right-hand man. Then came the War, and their joint experiences in the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and the promotion of the then Food Controller to the rank of Viscount, with special remainder to this remarkable daughter, who has since developed into director of a number of important business concerns, a capable chairman of committees, founder and editor of a successful weekly paper, and, not least, author of one of the most interesting autobiographies of recent years.

One Way of an Eagle.

Mr. Ramshaw My Eagle
Is your book of the words
If you want to inveigle
The King of the Birds
From his ptarmigan-hunting
And hill-hardihood,
And have him film-stunting
Like all Hollywood.

Yes, if you 'd be looter
From The Black Mount or
Mar
Of an eaglet to tutor
And turn to a Star,
Captain KNIGHT's book now
tells you
The way to proceed,
And ARROWSMITH sells you
This work that you 'll read.

For *Ramshaw* a-making
Intrigues, in its way,
Even if you are taking
No eagles to-day;
And a point it can prove is
(If eagle are you),
Life thrills in the movies
Much more than the Zoo.

A Heroine of La Vendée.

CARLYLE, maintaining that battles have lost interest since HOMER's time, might have made an exception of the Vendean Wars, with their personal fervour of heroic peasants waging under their own territorial leaders an inevitably losing contest for King and Faith. Women, gentle and simple, played notable parts in these campaigns, harbouring Royalists in the teeth of Republican search-parties, succouring the wounded of both sides, and even on occasion fighting in male attire; and the wife and widow of two Royalist leaders, the Marquise DE LES-CURE, afterwards the Marquise DE LA ROCHEJAQUELEIN, left one of the most vivid—if also the most partisan—of memoirs dealing with the war as she knew it. This, in one of many pirated versions, was admired by NAPOLEON and said to have been found in his coach after Waterloo. It was translated by SCOTT the year after, but it has remained for Mr. CECIL BIGGANE to make the original autograph of the *Memoirs of the Marquise de la Rochejaquelein* (ROUTLEDGE, 15/-) the base of a well-annotated, vivid and serviceable abridgement. From the diarist's birth at Versailles among the early mutterings of the Revolution to the Spanish exile of her first widowhood, her narrative is an epic of gallant maidliness, matronly devotion and untiring loyalty to her own territory and neighbours. Yet she has praise for the Bretons who sheltered her in the hour of defeat; and the story of her sojourn amongst them in the spring of 1794 is for picturesque intimacy one of the most memorable passages in a memorable book.



Maid. "I PUT ME 'AND UNDER THE BOILING TAP, MUM, TO SEE IF IT WAS—AND IT WAS."

Among the Clouds.

The war-time record of a British Flying Corps pilot engaged almost daily over a long period in desperate personal encounter would seem a curiously-chosen topic to adorn with the subtler forms of humour; yet some person behind the scenes has added to the diary of an unknown fighter—*Death in the Air* (HEINEMANN, 8/6)—a glossary of slang and technical terms that includes some gems of facetious definition, while the publishers themselves, in apologising for their inability fully to guarantee the book's authenticity, add a touch of modest candour that is not devoid of charm. Yet if there is an element of relief in the geniality of a lexicographer who explains, for instance, that "mugs" is "slang for faces" and that "buzzed off"

is equivalent to "went away," the diary itself is grim enough, and so encompasses all the moods and chances of a pilot's fighting days that, if it could be wholeheartedly accepted at its face value, it must rank as one of the quite remarkable documents of the War. Even with whatever unfortunate element of doubt it must arouse, it remains an interesting piece of reconstruction. Here in photographs are aeroplanes colliding head-on, or bursting into flames, or breaking to pieces in mid-air, while the aviators perish or leap into space; and here in literal transcript from a diary are the pessimism and the patriotism, the rowdiness and the manhood of the aviators themselves. Regarded as a piece of reconstruction the book errs just a little, I think, on the side of post-war mentality.

The Mind of Modern France.

The title of Miss CICELY HAMILTON's new book, *Modern France* (DENT, 7/6), might lead one to suppose that it is a guide-book for travellers of the more literary sort; and perhaps it is, but a guide-book to the mind rather than to the topography of France to-day, and the traveller may read it with advantage as giving him—something more important than the names of the best hotels—the reasons why the French at this period are thinking as they do on a variety of subjects. There are chapters among others on "The Passing of the Peasant," "The Birthrate," "The Debatable Lands," "La Jeunesse and its Outlook," "The French Child's War," "The Family," "Sidelights on Depression," "The Army of To-day," and, as Miss HAMILTON's method has been to go deep rather than to spread wide, I have the impression that in as many chapters more she could not have completed her survey. In something over two hundred pages she has done very much towards it and done it with such keen interest on her own part that she makes sure of the reader's from the first page, and even statistics lose their intimidating aloofness. Miss HAMILTON, justly as she appreciates French good qualities, never uses them as a stick with which to beat her native land, though one or two customs from across the Channel are profitably recommended for our adoption. For these and many other reasons *Modern France* is well worth the attention of Modern England.

A Widow and her Mite.

The life-story of a widowed gentlewoman in reduced circumstances, letting lodgings to provide bread and boots for an eight-year-old only son—how easily might that have been either mawkish or drably depressing. But *Mrs. Barry* (COLLINS, 7/6) is neither the one nor the other, for Mr. FREDERICK NIVEN has handled his perilous theme with consummate artistry and a most delicate tact. He has written many good novels but never, I think, a better than this. The extreme simplicity of his narrative has no suggestion of false naivety, and his pathos never weakens into sentimentality. Not only has he salted it with humour but

he has endowed his heroine—a genuine heroine—with that quality as well as with courage, while *Neil*, though he is a very good little boy and old-fashioned after the manner of only children, is also a very human and likeable little boy. The other figures, lodgers and friends and the doctors who have to tell *Mrs. Barry* her fate, are sketched in lightly but with precision and vitality, each one completely realised. The story itself is of the most tenuous—just a series of pictures of life in shabbier Glasgow, little scenes of pleasure or excitement or distress, or only of the ordinary daily round, but they are exquisitely, one may be bold to say perfectly, done. It is no wonder that the Book Society has cast the eye of benevolence on this book.

Before and After Wesley.

Cornwall and the Cornish (DENT, 6/-) is written with the care and authority that made Mr. A. HAMILTON JENKIN's previous books, *Cornish Seafarers* and *The Cornish Miner*, notable additions to the literature of the Duchy. Here he is concerned with "the Story, Religion and Folk-lore of the Western Land," and, allowing himself wider scope than heretofore, he has given us a volume that, both from an historical point of view and as a record of old customs and superstitions, is of definite value. The chapters on "The Coming of Wesley" are especially graphic and worthy of attention. "Truly astonishing," he says, "was the change of attitude which Wesley's preaching had brought about amongst those who had once been ready to drive him from their midst. Nor was the seed of that preaching destined to fall upon shallow soil to flourish only for a day." These are facts which those of us who are not ignorant of the past and have also watched Cornwall's development into one of the popular holiday-grounds of England will not for a moment dispute. I pay tribute to Mr. JENKIN's book when I say that it makes me very doubtful whether this popularity is an unmingled blessing.

A Dance of Death.

When *Joseph K. Foxcroft*, a district attorney, was summoned to investigate *The Murder of Steven Kester* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 7/6) he was accompanied by *Rufus J. Bean*, captain of detectives; and if Miss HARRIETTE ASHBROOK's portrait of this captain is drawn from life my sympathies with anyone suspected of murder in America are profound. *Kester* was killed while his, or rather his granddaughter's, guests were dancing, and on the arrival of the police a rigorous examination of those present took place. In this inquiry a member of the house-party, familiarly known as *Spike*, was eager to assist. Nevertheless I can forgive his disloyalty to his fellow-guests because he was successful in putting several spokes into the wheel of the egregious *Bean*. The language of these suspicious and suspected people may be too frank and American for all tastes, but as Miss ASHBROOK keeps us guessing to the end she has presumably hit her target's bull's-eye.



Old Gentleman (indulgently, as motorist executes a violent swerve to avoid him). "YOU DID MAKE ME JUMP THAT TIME. AH, WELL, BOYS WILL BE BOYS!"